

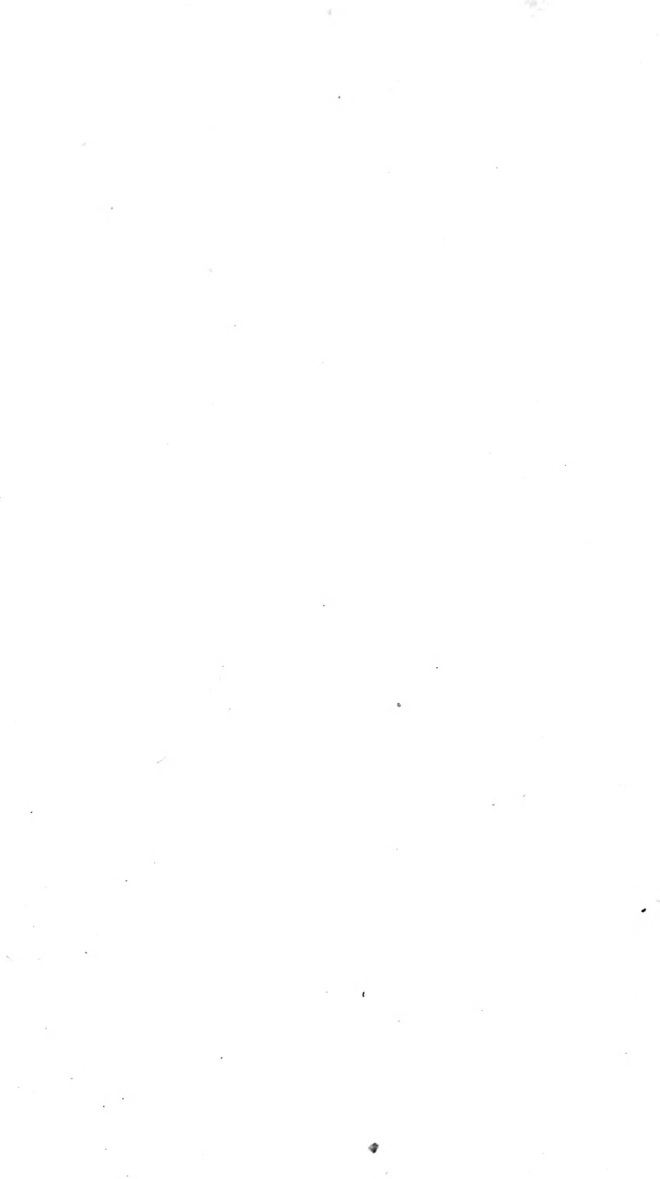




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THE  
MICROCOSM.

BY THE AUTHOR

OF

VICISSITUDES IN GENTEEL LIFE.

---

“ Expectation too highly raised is generally disappointed. It is  
“ wisdom to rein imagination in its first flights, lest it  
“ o’er-step the modesty of nature !”

---

*IN FIVE VOLUMES.*

VOL. II.

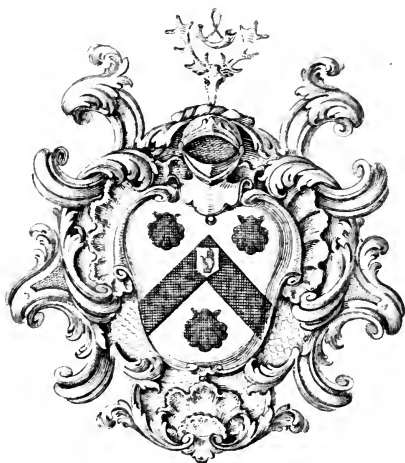
London :

PRINTED FOR J. MAWMAN, IN THE DOULTRY.

1801.

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By T. Gillet, Salisbury-square.



*S<sup>r</sup> Edw. Littleton Bart.*

823  
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THE

AMERICAN

REVIEW

OF

THE

ARTS

# THE MICROCOSM.

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## CHAP. XXXII.

*Retrospection; and the Nabobs.*

**M**ISS Montague retired to rest—but not to sleep. Cupid bribed Somnus to let him supply his place till morning, when, about two hours before the usual time of rising, the minister of sleep returned to tell the laughing boy his time was expired, and to desire him to suspend his power over the fair one; at which the fly urchin smiled, and pretended to withdraw; but he had previously persuaded Morpheus to let him take his form, and execute his office.

In simple sober language—the lovely Harriet never closed her eyes till after daylight; and when, for a short time, she yielded to the force of nature, her dreams again presented the realities upon which she had been ruminating. Mrs. Percival, whose bed she constantly shared, was surprised at her unusual restlessness, and with some little appearance of concern, enquired the cause. Harriet thanked her; but assured her she was very well, only somewhat incommoded by the warmth of the weather.

New, pleasing, and perplexing, were now the meditations of Miss Montague. An uninvestigated world seemed opened to her view. The course of her ideas were turned, and Henry Seymour terminated every prospect. She wondered how the alteration of their sentiments came about, and what would be its event. He had told her, indeed, that no other could ever have a place in his affection, and that he hoped she would not refuse to accept his name.

name and fortune, as soon after his return from College, as Martin's Priory could be made ready to receive her.

“And should she, one day, be Mrs. Seymour!” “And would it be her duty, as well as pleasure, to study continually the happiness of her Henry!” “Blest idea!” “The felicity,” she doubted, “would be too great to be realized.”

With these thoughts did she arise, and prepare to meet Seymour in the breakfast room; a circumstance which now appeared to her of amazing consequence. She dressed herself with unusual care, and with a heart throbbing with increased perturbation at every step, left her apartment.

Henry had passed the night in almost the same manner as his Harriet. Like her, he had scarcely given two hours tribute to the nocturnal ministers. Like her, he had contemplated his future felicity; which, however, did not strike him with such wonder, as the idea was more familiarized; he having long rested the prospect of his hap-

pincks in the lovely fair one : but the hope that she was sensible, without disapprobation, of his tenderness, infused such transport into his heart, as prevented the approach of drowiness.

When Harriet entered the breakfast room, she found most of the party, her Henry amongst the rest, there assembled. The customary salutations over, Mr. Barker kindly observed, she did not look so lively as usual, and asked how she had rested.

“ Not at all,” said Mrs. Percival ; “ nor would she let *me* rest. I cannot think what ailed her ! She generally sleeps sound enough.”

The eyes of Miss Montague at that moment met those of Mr. Seymour, who then advanced from the farther end of the room. A tremor instantly seized her frame : every beauteous feature was suffused with crimson, and she made a very indistinct reply ; while the graceful youth turned to a window to hide his own, and prevent her farther confusion.

During

During the time of breakfasting, Harriet did not once dare to look up, lest she should again encounter the eyes of Henry; while he with secret rapture, observed the delicate, conscious timidity of the charming maid; who looked, he thought, that morning, more beautiful than usual.

For two or three days the weather proved wet; all they saw of each other was in these family meetings. The rain kept the ladies from visiting, and likewise prevented their evening walks. On the fourth day, the sky being clear, it was proposed the family should make their first visit to Mr. Bullion, who, with his wife and daughter, was lately returned from India, where, by methods not very laudable, he had acquired an enormous property. Miss Rebecca Bullion was the only child of this Nabob. She was now upwards of seventeen; was stout in her person, and of bold and forward manners. Her mother had taught her to think that all perfection centered in riches, and that every young woman who had not

a right to expect some thousands, was to be treated as an inferior. Mr. Bullion, who encouraged these sentiments in his daughter, had been only a few weeks settled in the neighbourhood, when Mrs. Percival cast her eye upon the young lady, as a suitable wife for the Heir of Spencer Aviary, and advised her son to employ a friend to mention the matter to Mr. Bullion, who, upon investigation into circumstances, soon listened, and replied to the proposals in such a manner as gave satisfaction to the Percivals. The reader, if the ensuing scene did not obliterate the circumstance, may recollect the mention of this letter by the ladies in the alcove, when Harriet gained the intelligence which taught her the real state of her affection. In that letter Mr. Bullion settled the matter *sans ceremonie*, agreeing that his daughter should give her hand, with a hundred thousand pounds, to Mr. Stephen Percival, on the day which should entitle the young gentleman to the Aviary. All the business relative



tive to this affair, consequential as it was, the two fathers settled in a very short period, the dispositions and qualities of the parties most concerned, not being considered as material, even by themselves, nor thought of by their paternal friends. *They were rich.* That was sufficient. That, in their opinion, was the *Summum bonum*. The bargain, therefore, was very soon concluded; for that such a fortune required such a settlement, was as easily to calculate, as that two halfpenny loaves were worth a penny.

When Mr. Bullion first received the intimation that Mr. Percival would be pleased with the alliance, he went home, after having made proper enquiries relative to the estate of the family, and thus addressed his daughter.

“Well, Becca, I think I have now picked you up a sweetheart, who will be very suitable to our expectations.”

“He must then have a great fortune,” answered the young lady, “or he will not suit me.”

“You cannot suppose, my dear girl,” said the mother, “that your papa would think of marrying you to a beggar!”

“Why no indeed,” replied he, throwing himself in an arm-chair with an air of consequence, “Benjamin Bullion, Esquire has not moiled and toiled amongst a herd of savages for wealth which is to be cast away upon nothing! The gentleman I have lighted upon will have upwards of twelve thousand pounds *a year per annum!*”

“And so he ought,” returned Miss Bullion, “for my fortune. I do not think the match any thing extraordinary.”

“Softly, softly Becca,” said the father; “twelve thousand pounds a year, let me tell you, is not a thing of every day. Besides, this is none of your wish-washy nomination estates, mortgaged for nine-tenths of its worth. It will, I dare take my corporal oath of it, bring home to its owner every farthing of its rental.”

“That

“ That alters the case,” said Mrs. Bullion ; “ for I must confess I began to think  
“ with Miss Bullion, that the fortune we  
“ can give her has a right to expect what  
“ *goes* for twelve thousand a year ; if not  
“ for an estate still larger.”

“ Well, well ; I shall be satisfied,” said the daughter ; “ and now pray tell us who  
“ the gentleman is, and when the matter  
“ is to be concluded ?”

“ Why, the gentleman is the young  
“ squire who is to come to Spencer Aviary ;  
“ and you are to be married when he be  
“ twenty-one, as on that day he is to turn  
“ out the folks who now live there, and  
“ take possession” — was Mr. Bullion’s  
answer.

“ When he be twenty-one ! And pray  
“ when will that be ? How old is he  
“ now ?” — inquired the young lady.

“ He is exactly your own age,” said the father, “ all but half a year. You have  
“ just six months the start of him.”

“Then I am to be kept in waiting till  
 “near twenty-two, am I?” asked Miss.  
 “If the bargain had *not* been quite so  
 “good, and nearer at hand, it would, I  
 “think, have been as well.”

“Be satisfied, Rebecca. The thing is  
 “a good thing; and the time will soon  
 “pass away in courtship and other amuse-  
 “ments: for as to the certainty of it—  
 “your papa will, I dare say, bind the  
 “parties firm and fast on parchment,” was  
 Mrs. Bullion’s conciliatory speech.

“Firm and fast! Yes, yes; I fancy I  
 “shall indeed: let Ben alone for that.  
 “Whichever party calls off, shall forfeit a  
 “good round sum; so that at any rate we  
 “shall have them *upon the hip*. As to *us*—  
 “if any thing should happen in the mean  
 “time, whereby we should be bettered,  
 “why we can but pay the fine; which  
 “would not signify, if the new business  
 “would indemnify us. We will not throw  
 “away dirty water, as the book says, before  
 “we have got clean; nevertheless, it is  
 “a good

"a good thing to have a string to a  
latch."

To the last speech of her father, Miss  
Bullion, who was in haste to dress for a  
ball, made the following reply, which con-  
cluded the conversation.

"Well, well, papa, you know I shall be  
very well contented to marry whom you  
please; provided he be rich; will make  
me a good jointure, and allow me hand-  
some pin-money. I only wish the  
gentleman had given a nearer prospect  
of concluding the bargain; for while I  
am only Miss Bullion, I must give place  
to some people who have not a tithe of  
my fortune."

Such was the family with whom the  
Percivals were now going to commence an  
acquaintance. The visit was proposed in  
the breakfast room, and soon agreed to;  
when Mrs. R. Percival observed, that as  
they must go in full dress, they must not  
crowd the carriages; and she thought it  
would be most convenient for Miss Mon-

tague not to go. The lady's private reason was, that she did not think Harriet would be a *foil* to her daughter. The moment Mrs. R. Percival intimated her objection, Seymour turned a quick eye upon Miss Montague. The look he gave spoke the dictates of his heart, and expressed a wish that the event might be propitious to another meeting. She understood the dialect, and a scarlet cheek conveyed to him her reply. This blush, which accompanied a bow of acquiescence to Mrs. R. Percival, was misconstrued by Miss Barbara, who, with malignancy in her eye, said, "My cousin Harriet reddens; and I do not wonder at it; for it is not pleasant to be prohibited shewing one's new finery."

This speech was made on account of an elegant cap which Mr. Ruffel had enabled his favourite lately to purchase. Harriet made no reply, but left the room, and the evening richly consoled her for not being of the visiting party, by affording her some enviable hours of Henry's company in a walk

walk through the gardens. Mr. Barker had invited the two youngest boys (all the rest of the family being gone to Mr. Bullion's) to take a ride with him to Mr. Abington's, where, finding Mr. Ruffel at home, he imparted to him the intelligence he had gathered from observation, respecting the predilection of their young friends, and of the meditated plan of the Percivals to unite Mr. Seymour with their eldest daughter, to whom he thought it evident Seymour had an absolute dislike.

Mr. Ruffel was extremely pleased with both these circumstances; for a union between Henry and Harriet was what he secretly wished; and good as was his disposition, he could not but enjoy the disappointment such an event would occasion to the monopolizing views of the Percivals; for not one of whom, George excepted, he had any partiality. Mr. Barker was entirely of Mr. Ruffel's opinion respecting the family at the Lodge; who, though they always treated him with  
great

great respect, never gained much of his esteem. The neglect with which they all behaved to the lovely Harriet, made him extremely angry with them, and fixed him still more firmly her friend. At Spencer Aviary ; at the Shrubbery, and at Mr. Abington's, (by all but Miss Martha, who never approved any thing which was disliked by her *dear* Mrs. R. Percival) Miss Montague was greatly beloved. Our venerable Mr. Spencer was particularly fond of this beauteous orphan ; and between her and Mr. E. Spencer's Lucy, there subsisted the most genuine friendship, which was chiefly carried on by letters ; Mr. Russel having obtained a promise that their correspondence should be unmolested, as nothing, he said, was a greater improvement to the mind, than for two young women of virtuous principles to write, with unreserve, their sentiments to each other. Of these letters, he was very often the bearer, and would frequently wait at



the Lodge for an answer to that which he carried.

The visit at Mr Bullion's was intended to be quite a formal one; but the forwardness of both the parties bringing on a general explanation of the intended event, an intimacy, or what they were pleased to term a friendship, immediately commenced; and Mr. Stephen Percival, a tall, stout young fellow of seventeen, was the declared and accepted lover of Miss Bullion.

---

## CHAP. XXXIII.

### *Introduction of the Nabobs.*

THE visit to Mr. Bullion's; or, as the young lady now chose to call the place of their residence, Bullion Bower, was very soon returned; and upon this occasion there was a gorgeous display of East India finery. Mrs. Bullion herself  
was

was in a pompadour satin gown and petticoat, round the bottom of which was a broad gold lace. Her head, neck, ears and fingers, were loaded with various colored precious stones. Mr. Bullion, in consequence of having once been an ensign in the militia, chose to wear regimentals, which, like his lady's gown, were ornamented with broad gold lace. Miss Bullion's dress was a full yellow, trimmed with silver. Her petticoat was silver tissue, and she wore almost as many jewels as her mother.

Turn now your eye, my observing friend, to the beautiful, the modest, the delicate Harriet Montague, who appeared in a fine thin muslin, under which she wore a very pale pink lustring. Her cap, light and airy, and put on with peculiar taste, was of the turban kind, and she had in her bosom a natural bouquet, with which Henry Seymour had just presented her, of rose-buds and jessamine. Every female eye saw her with envy, while Seymour gazed upon her with

with almost unrestrainable rapture ; so conspicuous did she shine, upon a comparison with the other ladies present.

Just before tea was carried in, Harriet went out of the room, when Miss Bullion enquired who that beautiful young lady was—for she had not been made of so much consequence as to be particularly introduced to the guests, though she had not before been in their company.

To Miss Bullion's inquiry, Mrs. R. Percival carelessly replied, that she was the orphan-child of a daughter of Mrs. Percival's, who had married indiscreetly.

“ And does she reside with you, Madam ? ” was Miss Bullion's second question.

“ Yes, poor girl ! ” said the lady of the Lodge, “ we have taken her under our protection ; for she has little or nothing to support herself.”

“ Bless me ! ” exclaimed Miss Bullion, “ I thought, by seeing her in such company, she had been a person of property ; ”  
“ and

“and I vow, at first sight, I thought her  
“rather handsome; but I only passed my  
“eye over her; and now I recollect, there  
“is a vulgarity in her face from which one  
“may judge she is not a woman of fortune.”

At this speech of the Nabob's daughter, Henry Seymour could hardly restrain his indignation; but he was still farther provoked, when after some similar observations from the ladies, Miss Bullion said—“If  
“the young woman is so destitute, I vow,  
“as she bears a distant relationship to the  
“family, I should be willing to give her a  
“trifle; and should not have much objection to take her, when we go to Spencer-  
“Aviary, as one of my women. At present I am supplied in that capacity; but  
“as these creatures grow insolent if they  
“are kept about one too long, it will not,  
“probably, be a great while before I make  
“a change in my establishment. Let it  
“be mentioned to her, madam, if you  
“please; and tell her if she wishes to go a  
“month

“month or so upon liking, we will try  
“what we can do with her.”

At this, Seymour hastily arose from his chair, and darting a contemptuous look at Miss Bullion, quitted the room with a haughty air, and went into the garden to endeavor to subdue his resentment.

The reader may possibly suppose that Miss Bullion's good-nature induced her to think of taking Miss Montague under her protection; but we beg leave to inform him it was a quite contrary principle which excited the idea. The moment she knew that she was not *rich*, she was provoked at her daring to be handsome; a privilege which she thought ought to be confined to the possession of wealth. She, therefore instantly hated her with inveteracy, and immediately determined to endeavor to mortify her.

“Upon my word,” said Miss Percival,  
“I think it will be a good thing for cousin  
“Harriet; as it may prove an establish-  
“ment for her as long as she lives.”

“Has

“Has not the poor girl any fortune?” asked Mrs. Bullion.

“Her mother left eight hundred pounds “in my hands,” replied Mrs. Percival; “but a considerable part of that has been “sunk in educating her.”

“Eight *hundred*!” exclaimed the opulent heiress. “What is eight hundred! “What is eight *thousand* for a girl of “fashion? If I had not more than *ten* “times *that* sum, I should think myself “poor.”

The pittance of our favorite was now made a subject of ridicule; but Miss Bullion’s *kind* proposal was declined, as it was rightly conjectured that Mr. Ruffel would oppose Miss Montague’s attending Miss Bullion in that capacity.

Tea was now carried into the drawing-room, when Harriet and Mr. Seymour were summoned to attend. After that ceremony was over, the *heiress* was requested to oblige the company by performing upon the forte piano. With a great many  
affected

affected heirs she complied, and was just sat down to the instrument, when Mr. Russel entered the room. The song which she was playing, favoring the auditors, at the same time, with the efforts of a very loud and coarse voice, was “ *The lass with the delicate air ;*” which Mrs. Bullion industriously intimated was composed, on her daughter’s account, by a young squire who was in love with her, but who was not rich enough to succeed. After the fine lady arose, the Misses Percivals were requested to sit down ; but no notice was taken of Harriet, till Mr. Russel led her to the instrument, and desired her to give him his favorite song,—“ *Though Prudence may press me, &c.*” With unfeigned reluctance she complied, while a supercilious smile went partly round the room ; though every heart did silent justice to her almost unequalled execution, and charming voice. When she sang the line—“ *My heart, my fond heart, says my Henry is true ;*”—the loveliest blush pervaded her cheeks.

cheeks. Seymour saw it with delight; Mr. Russell observed him, and smiled with complacency upon the elegant pair.

Soon after this, the gentlemen were summoned to look at a horse which was brought for Mr. Percival to pass his judgment upon, and if he approved it, to purchase. During their absence, Miss Bullion observed that Mr. Seymour was a very handsome young man; and asked if he was a man of fortune. When she was answered in the affirmative, she said she had asked a foolish question, as his appearance confirmed that idea beyond dispute. All this time Miss Percival sat bridling and trying to blush; which Miss Bullion perceiving, said—  
“ Oh ho! I see how the game lies! He is  
“ a lover of your’s, I observe. Am I not  
“ right, my dear Miss Percival? You see I  
“ have some penetration.”

“ Why Miss Bullion!—Why upon my  
“ word—But you put one into such a”—  
affectedly stammered out this vain girl, wishing to confirm the idea.

“ Aye,



“Aye, aye, I see very plainly how it is,” returned the other; adding, with a forwardness almost incredible at so early an age, “I aver I shall greatly like him for a brother-in-law.”

The gentlemen now entered the room, which gave a turn to the conversation, greatly to the relief of our Harriet; to whom it was extremely painful; she as much endeavoring to hide real blushes, as the other did to produce false ones; but Miss Bullion, previous to her departure, actually took an opportunity of speaking to Mr. Seymour, saying,—“So, Sir, “I find you and I are one day to form an “alliance in this family; and as people of “condition are above ceremony, I shall “henceforth look upon, and treat you as “my future brother-in-law.”

Nothing could equal Henry's astonishment at this address. He was likewise provoked by it to a high degree, as it was spoken within the hearing of Miss Montague, to whose bosom it gave a severe pang:  
had

had he made a reply, it must have been expressive of a surprise, which might have produced disagreeable consequences : fortunately Mr. Bullion that instant called out—"Come, Becca, come, let us be jogging. It is getting duskish, and I don't love to be out in the dark."

This speech spared the indignant youth from attempting an answer. The Bullion family made their departing honors ; and their equipage, no less gorgeous than their apparel, was driven from the Lodge to the Bower ; the assurance of Miss Montague in being beautiful without riches, making a part of the travelling conversation ; and the Bullion family concluding that she was not to be taken any notice of in their future visits.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

*Room for Imagination.*

**R**ECEIVING and returning visits almost perpetually employed the family at the Lodge, but Harriet was less and less invited to make one of the party. Her beauty increased daily and the powers of her mind continually expanded, which rendered her an object of envy and hatred to all the Percivals, but of admiration, esteem and affection to every other individual with whom she was acquainted. The improvements, both in person and mind, of her Henry, were as distinguishable and as rapid as her own; and he was equally the object of universal applause. The interviews between this lovely pair were not very frequent, as prudence rendered it absolutely necessary for them to keep secret their mutual attachment. When, favored by accident, they *did* enjoy each others company without

observation, they received ample amends for the scarcity of their meetings; and this circumstance, it is likely, gave double ardency to their affection, now fixed and rooted beyond the probability of ever ceasing to exist.

As the reader has been told that an epistolary correspondence was regularly kept up between Miss Montague and Miss Spencer, we will indulge him with the transcription of a letter from each of these ladies, beginning with one

*From Miss Spencer to Miss Montague.*

“ Monday morning.

“ My dearest Harriet,

“ As my uncle Ruffel has informed me  
“ that he means to be at the Lodge in the  
“ evening, I am determined to write to you  
“ upon a subject which has of late occa-  
“ sioned me some anxiety; and without a  
“ preface, will ask you the cause of that  
“ pensive air which, for some time back,  
“ has

“ has pervaded a countenance so naturally  
 “ free and open as yours. Knowing, as I  
 “ do, the disagreeableness of your situation,  
 “ I am willing to believe it the effect of  
 “ that unkindness you so often meet with  
 “ from your relations, not one of whom are  
 “ worthy to claim kindred with the greatly  
 “ superior friend of my heart. As to our  
 “ cousin Barbara—though, thank my stars !  
 “ she is not very near to me—she absolutely  
 “ grows worse and worse. Her pride and info-  
 “ lence are intolerable, and it is she, I some-  
 “ times think, who renders your residence  
 “ at the Lodge particularly irksome : but I  
 “ am half apprehensive of there being some  
 “ *other* cause for the unusual appearance of  
 “ gravity which, of late, I have noticed in  
 “ your air and manner.

“ My Harriet’s happiness is dear to me,  
 “ and she must either ease my anxiety on  
 “ the subject, without hesitation, or prepare  
 “ herself for more minute interrogation from  
 “ her truly affectionate

—LUCY SPENCER.”

*Miss Montague to Miss Spencer.*

“ Monday evening.

“ Did my Lucy know the severity of the  
“ task she has imposed, her gentle heart  
“ would feel the pain she has given to that  
“ of her friend, who is at this time over-  
“ whelmed by a variety of contending sen-  
“ sations—sensations so new to her, that she  
“ knows not how to conduct herself under  
“ their influence.

“ Why, my dear girl ! did you not ad-  
“ vance some *suppositions*—why not endea-  
“ vor to *guess* the secret cause of the pen-  
“ siveness which is, it seems, so evident to  
“ observation ? My work had then been  
“ easier ; as I could readily have given an  
“ affirmative or a negative to such and such  
“ advanced ideas, whereas to own—to con-  
“ fess—to acknowledge all at once—Ah  
“ Lucy ! what is it I would say ! I am  
“ ashamed of myself ; ashamed of saying  
“ that I have a secret to discover. Many  
“ times

“ times have I wished to acquaint you with  
“ a circumstance which, as I write, gives a  
“ sensible glow to my cheek, but I have  
“ hitherto been, as I am now, at a loss for  
“ expression when I attempt the subject.

“ My Lucy is now all astonishment at  
“ what I write. She is alarmed lest her  
“ friend should have been guilty of some  
“ reprehensible conduct, which should  
“ make her blush at the partial opinion she  
“ has so long entertained. But I hope, my  
“ dear girl, I shall not, in your eyes, be  
“ deemed *very* faulty for any thing but not  
“ immediately acquainting you with every  
“ particular. Perhaps were some in this  
“ family to be judges, I should be con-  
“ demned without hesitation, as you too  
“ well know I have not much cause to ex-  
“ pect a friendly verdict from any one at  
“ the Lodge but Mr. Barker, George Per-  
“ cival and—Mr. Seymour.

“ And now, Lucy, need I say any more?  
“ Is not that last name a sufficient expla-  
“ nation of every required circumstance!  
“ But O! I am covered with confusion,

“and my hand trembles so greatly, as you  
 “will see by my writing, that I cannot  
 “proceed. It will not, I hope, be long  
 “before we meet; you shall then, upon  
 “demand, know every particular of this  
 “too interesting affair, which communica-  
 “tion will, I doubt not, greatly relieve the  
 “oppressed heart of your

“HARRIET MONTAGUE.”

This correspondence was, as we have  
 said, constantly kept up by means of Mr.  
 Ruffel, who, at the request of Lucy Spen-  
 cer, proposed a visit from the friends at the  
 Shrubbery to the Lodge, soon after the ex-  
 change of the foregoing letters; Lucy be-  
 ing very impatient for an eclaircissement  
 with her beloved Harriet. The proposal  
 was agreed to, and the young ladies had an  
 opportunity for the desired explanation,  
 with which Miss Spencer was greatly de-  
 lighted. The opportunity was given them  
 during a ramble that the company took in  
 Mr. Percival's park, where they were divided  
 into several groupes. Towards the end of the  
 walk



walk, they were accidentally met by Henry Seymour, who guessing the subject of their conversation, begged to be permitted to join in it, which was refused by Harriet, but complied with by Miss Spencer, who unreservedly told him she was made quite happy by the intelligence she had received, and begged him to look upon her as a friend devoted to the advancement of their mutual felicity. This declaration was a great relief to the gentleman, who, afterwards, frequently rode over to the Shrubbery, that he might have the satisfaction of talking with Lucy about Miss Montague, which fixed the foundation of a firm friendship between Miss Spencer and Mr. Seymour.

The removal of the young gentlemen to college was now much talked of; but it was from time to time deferred by the consent of the parties concerned. Mr. Pervival's motive was avarice: for while they continued at Beverly, Mr. Seymour's expences included all that was necessary for the instruction of the rest; Mr. Barker be-

ing paid out of the rents of Martin's Priory. As to the young lover—he was perfectly satisfied with his situation, and though he wished, some time or other, to go to the university, could not help being pleased with Mr. Percival's frequent delays. Mr. Barker indeed was impatient to enter his pupils at college; as though (notwithstanding the forms of a school were laid aside) they regularly pursued their studies, he thought their knowledge would be greatly enlarged by a residence at Cambridge; which, on account of its nearness, was preferred to Oxford.

It was chiefly with reference to the young Percivals that Mr. Barker encouraged their removal; for he frequently told Mr. Russell that he did not think it possible for Henry Seymour to be more finished than he was, either in learning or manners. This gentleman was exactly such a tutor as every father, careful for his children's good could wish, as he was distinguished by piety, politeness, and universal knowledge. To make him the highest compliment we can think of—he

he was totally the reverse of Doctor Y. and Doctor Z. the first, a lately-made dean in a celebrated cathedral; the other a prebend, and chaplain in the family of a nobleman. These divines, who married women of fashion, and have numerous offsprings, have no other wish for their children than to hear them applauded for *good breeding*; that is, for a perfect observance of all the rules of etiquette; and for being fine gentlemen and ladies: they never condescend to perform one of the material duties of their office; for though they sometimes read a sermon, they habitually unsay, not only by their practice, but their precepts, all that they delivered from the pulpit; conversing, and conducting themselves with pride, and insolence, and arrogance, instead of humility, meekness, and modesty; valuing themselves more on the fancied dignity of their ancestry, or on the richness of their benefices, than upon those qualifications which alone can render them respectable.

## CHAP. XXXV.

*A Fire.*

**W**ITHIN a short time from the period, at which we closed our last chapter, the family at Beverly Lodge, about three or four hours after they had retired to rest, were alarmed with loud screams of fire from several quarters of the building. Every bed was instantly vacated; while every eye was terrified by the surrounding flames, which rose in divers directions, from below. The house, in a few moments, was in a tumult; every one endeavoring to escape destruction. Mr. Seymour's first idea rested on his Harriet: Harriet's thoughts immediately turned upon the danger of her Henry, whom she met at the bottom of the stairs which led to her apartment, as he was going to her assistance. He spoke in expressions of transport at find-  
ing

ing her in safety, but without staying to enjoy that felicity, he hastened to see if any stood in need of relief; but happily, every individual found a safe way out of the house, and all hands were in an instant employed in endeavoring to extinguish the flames. The village was soon alarmed and the parish engine procured, but the edifice being chiefly composed of timber, and the weather dry, the fire raged with such violence, that it could not be suppressed before a great part of the building was destroyed. The writings, apparel, and a considerable part of the furniture, were preserved; Mr Percival, when he saw the rapidity of the flames, wisely turning his efforts to save the moveables. At length, however, by the increase of assistants, the fire was extinguished, but not till it had so greatly damaged the structure that there was not one room left habitable. The family resorted to the out-buildings, and as soon as they were a little composed, dispatched a messenger with the intelligence

of the event, to Mr. Spencer, from whom they immediately received an invitation to repair without delay to Spencer Aviary. The invitation was gladly accepted; and they were all conveyed to the hospitable mansion as soon as possible; leaving in the ruins proper persons to take care of the remains.

The cause of this dreadful conflagration was never perfectly elucidated, but that it arose from design was evident, as the flames appeared from several parts of the building at once. It was conjectured to have been the work of a parcel of gipsys, who for some days had been hovering about the village, and had suddenly disappeared about the time of the fire. On one of the preceding days, it seems, they had met with a poor, but decent looking woman whose husband had been pressed upon his landing, after a long voyage, while she was rejoicing at his return, and presenting him with a smiling infant, of which she had been delivered during his absence. This poor creature  
had

had given to her unhappy partner, upon his being apprehended and torn from her arms, her very last sixpence, and she was now returning with her child, to her miserable home, when pressed by want, she had stopped at the gates of the Lodge to request a piece of bread. On this occasion George Percival, who had frequently been severely chidden for similar offences, begged of the housekeeper a part of a brown loaf, and had presented it to the wretched traveller just as his father arrived at the spot where she was curtesying her silent thanks; for grief, and fears, and faintness prevented her articulate acknowledgments. Enraged by the spectacle before him, the stern man turned to the reddening youth, and said with a frowning aspect—"How *dare* you sir thus  
"persist in acting contrary to my positive  
"commands!"—taking at the same instant, from the hungry object, the welcome morsel which she was conveying to her mouth, and giving it to a brace of pointers which had accompanied him in the field,  
and

and which he afterwards set upon the trembling sufferer (whom he threatened with the house of correction) to drive her from his domains: the fierce animals obeyed their master's commands, and tore her garments as she fled, pressing her infant to her breast, with screams for mercy. This woman, it was said, ran till she saw the gang of gipsys, of whom we have been speaking, when overwhelmed by new terrors, she sank breathless at their feet as they approached. On this, one of them, who seemed to have some authority, ordered the women to assist and endeavour to nourish her, and she was soon able to inform them of the cause of her distress. When the depredators heard of the behaviour of Mr. Percival, they vowed to revenge the cause of the unhappy woman, who had strongly excited even their pity, and giving her some food from their travelling store-room, dismissed her with her child, the fear of losing whom had, on the first appearance of the gipsys, totally overpowered her senses. After her departure,



departure, the gang proceeded, as fame reported, to a neighbouring barn, and on that night the Lodge was destroyed.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### *An Appeal recalled.*

**I**T is now a long time since we have taken any rest, and as we have lately travelled with considerable velocity, we may reasonably complain of being rather tired. We will therefore allow ourselves a few minutes relaxation ; and by way of amusement, will ask our fair friends a few trifling questions ; beginning with Miss Jenny and Miss Selina.

Pray young ladies how do you like our history ? Does it accord with your opinions and sentiments ?

Yet, upon second thoughts, which most people say are best, though we are of opinion  
that

that the prompt dictates of honest nature are in general preferable to the fly suggestions of policy and cunning: Yet, as we do not affirm this rule to be without exception, we say that *upon second thoughts*, we recall our appeal on account of its being premature, as our work has not yet travelled round the Island, and neither Miss Jenny nor Miss Selina ever venture a sentence of their own. They first hear the opinion of *fashionable people* in town and public places, and then they return to their native village to inform their rustic neighbours; surprising the attentive listeners with the smartness and aptness of their satire, levelled frequently at those who are, in every respect, their superiors. Hear their opinion of any new publication, and you will think them profound critics: read the book which they have commended or condemned, and you sir, who are a man of taste as well as learning, will conclude that they have been speaking ironically, because they generally applaud what is reprehensible,

sible, and disapprove what is really meritorious. Whatever has a tendency to correct and amend the human heart, they loudly declaim against. "It is dull, it is stupid, it is abominable;"—is the *argument* in its disfavour; while whatever is ludicrous, whether moral or immoral, is extolled as "*an inimitable production*;" for these young ladies, my good readers, "LOVES FUN." We therefore think it proper to inform them that we do not deal in their way; that our writings are greatly above the compass of their judgment, and that if their assurance leads them to give any opinion on the subject, we earnestly request that they will speak decidedly against the performance, as it will be the surest method to advance its merit with the judicious part of their acquaintance.

And now, instead of appealing, as we intended doing, to any of our rational readers, we will attend the Percival family to Spencer Aviary, and see them received with compassionating kindness—with that  
true,

true, unaffected benevolence, which from early age, to his last day, distinguished Mr. Spencer. As soon as they were sufficiently composed, he enquired into the circumstances of the conflagration, and finding that the Lodge was rendered entirely uninhabitable, he, at once, set their hearts at ease, by insisting upon it, that the whole family should remain at the Aviary during the repairing or re-building of the destroyed edifice. This cheered the countenance of every individual, and Mr. Spencer was repaid with universal thanks.

Several days passed before any thing respecting the Lodge was publicly resolved upon; but Mr. and Mrs. R. Percival had held several consultations with their mother and son Stephen, upon the subject, in which they determined that a commodious elegant building should be erected in the most pleasant part of the park, for the reception of the family, till Stephen should arrive at the age which would put him into possession of that habitation where they were  
then

then hospitably entertained ; from which it was *very gratefully* agreed by this *quartette*, that the excellent parent should as soon as possible, be ejected, that Mrs. R. Percival might be gratified in her wish—ever the prime one in her heart—of being mistress of Spencer Aviary, as her son frequently assured her that she should be, during life. Whether he was or was not sincere in this particular, we will not now take upon us to affirm ; we will only observe, that if it *was* his design to fulfil the agreement, the motive which influenced him was founded on an idea of its being conducive to his interest ; a point which this young man kept constantly in his view.

Mr. Percival declaring his design respecting the demolished habitation, workmen were procured from every quarter, and the new structure was raised with uncommon expedition ; but as we do not find ourselves disposed to attend the artificers in their progress, we will relate some of the occurrences that passed at the Aviary, during

ing

ing the residence of the Percivals in that enviable situation.

Mr. Spencer, desirous to soften, as much as possible, the sense of the recent misfortune, gave general invitations, which were readily accepted by the distant friends of the family, to visit at his house with the same freedom as they had done at the Lodge.

The gentry in the vicinity were, as usual, frequently at the hospitable mansion; and the Abington's; Mr. Ruffel; Mr. Edward Spencer, with his lady and daughters, were generally there four or five times in a week; so that the house, large as it was, was often nearly filled with company, to the great gratification of its beneficent occupier.

Some of our perusers may wonder at the good man's being so much pleased with such a number of visitants; but they were not any restraint upon *him*, nor upon each other; every individual being left at liberty to pursue his own plan of amusement throughout the day. The Palace of Liberty,

berty, would have been a proper name for Spencer Aviary. Parties of pleasure, upon the fine piece of water that ran through the beautiful lawn at the bottom of the park, in elegant barges which had canopies to screen the mid-day sun—entertainments in the various alcoves, grottoes or temples that were scattered through the groves—refections on the verdant carpet under the leafy umbrage in the Aviary, with evening diversions in the little castle appropriated to such purposes, rendered the abode delightful to all who wished to join in public entertainments, while rural walks for sentimental friends, or more retired minds, were allowed without observation or inquiry. Harriet Montague and Lucy delighted to visit the Crescent ; the Square, and the residence of the feathered choristers, while others sought pleasure amongst numbers. Mr. Spencer would sometimes take a morning or an evening's ramble with our two amiable young friends last mentioned, in whose company he always professed to find  
the

the most lively gratification ; and especially if Henry Seymour was added to the party.

On the scenes now in view we could delight to dwell much longer, but business calls us away, and we will only observe that Arcadia in its meridian of perfection could not boast more elegant or more refined pleasures than SPENCER AVIARY.



## CHAP. XXXVII.

*Something about Beauty.*

**P**ATTY ABINGTON, whom, perhaps, our readers have almost forgotten, was a frequent visiter to Mrs. R. Percival, in her new abode. When she was not there, Miss Patty went but seldom, as neither Mr. Spencer, her brother, nor his lady, were companions suited to her inclination. She was now advancing to an age when, to preserve admiration, a woman should



should be studious to display those amiable qualities which the gentler sex ought continually to cultivate. The meridian of her beauty over, she should evince that she had not estimated youth, and the charms of person, at so high a rate as to be incapable of enduring the loss of them in herself, or of allowing with temper, another to possess what she had herself lost. She ought rather good-naturedly, to join in the admiration of a succeeding toast ; and thus prove that she had acquired some valuable substitutes for the transient bloom of the skin, or brilliancy of the eyes. As you Miss Framplin have not sufficient urbanity in your heart to incite such a conduct, let me advise you from policy to attempt this mode of behaviour. Smooth your brow ; soften the peevishness of your averted eye, and correct the tartness of your language, when a rising charmer appears in your presence, or in your hearing is made a subject of conversation.

Miss Abington, older by a year than  
Miss

Miss Martha, had not now this lesson to learn. She was taught it by nature, and it accorded with all her sentiments. She was of course, fond of her sister Spencer's children, and of the young ones from the Lodge. Harriet Montague was a particular favorite with her, and she saw with pleasure the attachment between her and Mr. Seymour. Miss Martha was so diametrically opposite to Miss Abington, that we need but draw a picture of the first, to see, by contrast, an exact one of the other. Miss Martha had a *dislike* to beauties ; indeed she was not fond of any young woman, whether handsome or otherwise ; especially if she had attracted the particular attention of any gentleman. On various accounts, this lady hated our lovely Harriet with a degree almost of inveteracy. Indeed Mrs. R. Percival's enmity to the amiable girl, would alone have fixed that of Patty Abington to the same object, as Mrs. R. Percival was the only human being to whose ideas her own were assimilated. Continually disappointed

in

in her expectations of the titled husband, which had been promised to her by the interpreter of the stars, the native peevishness of her temper was considerably increased, and she unavailingly regretted having refused one or two eligible proposals.

With this confession, which the lady herself was not very fond of making, we will take our leave, for the present, of Patty Abington, and attend to our new building.

Notwithstanding the unusual number of artificers who were employed in erecting Beverly new Lodge, it was several months before any of the rooms were habitable; but the kindness of Mr. Spencer, who afforded them all possible assistance in their undertaking, rendered the interim so pleasant, that Mrs. R. Percival almost fancied herself arrived at the summit of her wishes.

Various were the entertainments; and instructive, as well as pleasing, the generality of the conversations, which passed amongst the assembled friends. Mr. Ruf-

fel's attention was chiefly confined to the young ones of the party, whom he used to take great pleasure in diverting; often inventing for them some unexpected species of rural amusement. At these periods Henry Seymour frequently found opportunities of engaging the ear of his Harriet. For her sake, he endeavoured to be cautious in the affair; but the ardency of his affection laid him open to the artful observation of the Percivals. Stephen, who had long thought his cousin handsomer than his sisters, envied Mr. Seymour the sweetness of her smiles; and determining to destroy, if possible, the happiness which he perceived, he entered into a league with his sister Barbara, who, he well knew, had fixed her eye upon the accomplished youth, and by sly hints, first conveyed to her an idea of the envied, and reprobated attachment. This was enough; Miss Percival was immediately awakened to the suspicion, and asked her brother what means could be used.

used to prevent the lovers from forming any mutual engagement.

“Leave them to me,” said he; “you shall see what I can do. At present, take no notice of the affair to any one.”

It has been observed, that on the first alarm of the fire which destroyed the Lodge, Henry Seymour went in eager search of Miss Montague, and expressed his happiness at finding her in safety. This was overheard by Mrs. Percival, who treasured in her mind the information she had thus accidentally gained, determining to use it to the defeat of any plan which might be in agitation between the lovers, as she so inveterately hated the poor Harriet, that she could not endure the idea of her union with a person of such consequence, and who was intended for the husband of her favorite grand-daughter.

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

*Of less Consequence than any other in the  
History.*

AS the benevolent families of the Spencers and Abingtons, made it a rule to visit every body who settled in the vicinity, they had paid the usual compliment to the Bullions, soon after their arrival at the Bower, and had received a return; but it will not be supposed that minds so uncongenial should seek any degree of particular intimacy; the young lady therefore had never had the opportunity which she coveted, of exploring the beauties of her intended future residence.

As our readers have been told of Mrs. R. Percival's having received a promise from her son, that she should preside at the Aviary upon his taking possession, it may seem mysterious that Miss Bullion should  
look

look forward to the same event with similar expectations. That we may not be rendered liable to the imputation of dealing in incongruities, we think it necessary to say, that the intended mother and daughter-in-law settled this point at a very early period ; the matron telling the spinster that the estate was to be *her's* during her life, but that she should not make any objection, as the house was so immensely large, to the company of Stephen and herself, when they should be united.

This declaration was perfectly agreeable to Miss Bullion, who protested she should think herself very happy in having somebody to manage for her, as house-keeping was a business for which she had no relish.

*She should*, when her husband had changed his name, be *Mrs. Spencer* ! After that, *she should certainly have a title ! She should have a great estate and a fine house settled upon her and her's ! And she should have a coach and servants at her own command !*

*This* was Miss Bullion's *summum bonum*. For the rest she cared not; and Mrs. R. Percival's prospect of being mistress of Spencer-Aviary brightened daily.

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CHAP. XXXIX.

*Spirifers.*

MISS Bullion took the earliest opportunity of visiting the Percivals at their new place of residence; when she was gratified by seeing more of the house and gardens than she ever had done on any former occasion, as her *dear friends*, Miss Percival and Miss Deborah, invented a scheme which, without observation, drew the three from the rest of the company; and Miss was quite enchanted with the magnificent abode. She already selected such and such rooms to be appropriated to her particular use; amongst the rest an elegant drawing-room, in which she said she would receive her own company; and  
a suit



a suit of retired apartments, that in her opinion would be extremely well calculated for the *nursery*.

This survey was taken just before dinner, to which they were summoned by the sound of the second bell, while they were determining upon future arrangements.

The party was this day a very large one. The conversation, of course, turned upon a variety of subjects. Amongst other topics, that of old maids was brought upon the carpet, upon which some of the young ladies were particularly facetious. Miss Bullion declared her detestation of *those creatures* in general, though she protested that she knew some who were very agreeable; intending the exception as a compliment to two or three in the company, who were drawing near the dreaded æra of being dubbed members of the sisterhood.

“Take care of yourself Miss,” says Patty Abington, more offended than gratified at the idea of being included in the

exception ; “ old maids, as you term them,  
 “ were once young ones ; and young ones,  
 “ whether married or not, will assuredly  
 “ grow old. You are not yet secure from  
 “ being one day classed with the *creatures*  
 “ *you detest.*”

“ O ! as to that madam !—” rejoined  
 Miss Bullion—“ I have no fear, I do assure  
 “ you. Women with *my* fortune may,  
 “ from sixteen to sixty, buy a husband at  
 “ any time. Besides,” added the forward  
 girl, with a he, he, he, “ I do not think  
 “ Mr. Stephen Percival will be *false-*  
 “ *hearted.*”

Mr. Stephen Percival made a significant  
 bow ; adding what he knew would gratify  
 her more than any other compliment, that  
 a consideration for his *interest*, would in  
 that respect lead him to pursue his happi-  
 nesses.

Emily Abington, who sat unmoved by  
 the many sarcasms which now, from first  
 one, then another, were glanced upon the  
 sisterhood, saw, and pitied the agitation of  
 her

her sister Patty, with the uneasy looks of some others who stood in the same predicament, and entered the lists with the taunting opponents, who were headed by a young widow, and a lady that had lately been married.

“I believe,” said the amiable woman, “that I am the eldest spinster in the room, therefore have some right to ask why our sisterhood is held in such contempt.”

“*Why*, madam!” exclaimed the widow in her weeds—“why because—Bless me, madam, how can one answer you? Why because they are.”

“You have not, madam,” said Miss Abington, smiling, “given an answer that is quite satisfactory, unless you allow us to conclude that you have no other to offer.”

“Oh dear Miss Abington,” said the bride, “Mrs. Waldron could doubtless have said a great deal more, had she not been apprehensive of offending you. I

“ am sure I would not have been an old  
 “ maid for all the world!”

“ Mrs. Harrington,” said Mr. Ruffel,  
 “ I congratulate you on being so sensible  
 “ of the obligation you are under to your  
 “ husband. By your expression of joy on  
 “ your escape, I fancy you are beginning  
 “ to feel the terrors of being left in the  
 “ lurch.”

“ Who, I Sir? No, indeed, not I Sir;”  
 replied the lady, blushing with conscious-  
 ness and vexation; “ I do assure you, Sir,  
 “ I could have been married long ago, had  
 “ I thought proper.”

“ So, perhaps madam, could all the  
 “ single ladies present; none of whom, if  
 “ Emily Abington be the eldest, are so far  
 “ advanced as to despair of future offers.”

Every tongue was now engaged in taunts  
 or tart replies, till Miss Abington, stepping  
 up stairs, returned with an open paper,  
 which she put into the hand of Mr. Ruffel,  
 with these words.

“ If you, my dear Sir, will give yourself  
 “ the

“ the trouble to read this letter to the  
“ company, it will, perhaps, in some mea-  
“ sure, settle the contest in which we have  
“ been engaged. It was written, as you  
“ will see by its date, some time back.  
“ Mrs. Ann Kelby was its author. She  
“ sent it to her niece, the present Mrs.  
“ Monton, then Miss Venn, upon her first  
“ acquaintance with the gentleman to  
“ whom she is now married. Mr. Monton  
“ was only Miss Venn’s *equal*, which made  
“ Mrs. Kelby apprehensive that she might  
“ refuse the eligible offer. The first part  
“ of this letter (which was shuffled amongst  
“ some papers that I yesterday brought  
“ from home to read to my sister Spencer)  
“ is torn away. It related to Miss Eliza  
“ Lewson. Mrs. Kelby told Miss Venn,  
“ that Mrs. Lewson did not chuse to com-  
“ municate to her daughter (as she thought  
“ her too young to accept it) the offer  
“ which had been made, lest it should too  
“ much exalt her in her own opinion. The  
“ remainder of the letter speaks directly

“to the subject, in which we have been  
“engaged.”

Mr. Ruffel took the letter from his  
niece, and with a general assent, read what  
follows.

“—For the reason above-mentioned,  
“Mrs. Lewson did not chuse to inform her  
“daughter of the conquest she had made;  
“and Eliza’s youth considered, I cannot  
“but applaud her sentiments on the occa-  
“sion, though they are too opposite to the  
“general method of proceeding; that being  
“to acquaint the young lady with the  
“effect of her charms; to bid her *hold*  
“*up her head*, and not throw herself away,  
“as there is no doubt of her having, in  
“time, many admirers to chuse from; and  
“then a better, and a still better, is  
“expected, till Miss, having flirted with  
“many, and ill-treated all, is, at length,  
“left without any choice, and finds herself  
“doomed to the state she has so often made  
“a subject of her ridicule, when she  
“thought

“thought it impossible, that SHE should  
 “ever be a member of the despised society.  
 “The single life, of which I can surely  
 “speak from knowledge, has nothing ter-  
 “rible in it, when it is resolved upon from  
 “proper motives ; but if a woman declines  
 “matrimony because she cannot marry  
 “into such and such a rank, she merits all  
 “the severity she can meet with. Girls  
 “in this age—generally speaking—are  
 “educated above their situation, and are  
 “taught to look still higher.

“The daughter of a labourer gets into  
 “a good service ; grows smart, and looks  
 “about for a young man with what she  
 “calls a *business* ; that of a farmer, expects  
 “a genteel tradesman. *She will not, truly,*  
 “*follow the cows all her life ! She had rather*  
 “*live single !*

“This is her contemptuous expression  
 “of a situation, which enables her mother  
 “to dress her like a gentlewoman, and  
 “which is, in itself, truly respectable. A  
 “tradesman’s daughter looks up to a pro-  
 “fession ;

“ fession ; that of a professor, to the heir of  
 “ an esquire or the son of a baronet ; and the  
 “ daughters of these expect to mix with  
 “ nobility. No wonder that nobility aspires  
 “ to royalty.

“ This principle, my dear niece, has been  
 “ the bane of female felicity ; and it can  
 “ only be remedied by striking at the pride  
 “ of parents, who, grown rich in their oc-  
 “ cupations, begin to despise them, and  
 “ hope their children will ornament a more  
 “ elevated sphere.

“ The folly which urges people to *estab-*  
 “ *lish*, as the phrase is, *a family*, is both ri-  
 “ diculous and pitiable ; for if they are suc-  
 “ cessful, their heirs and heiresses spread  
 “ their connexions amongst the higher  
 “ branches of society, and when they draw  
 “ out their genealogical tree, cut off the  
 “ industrious root, that the meanneſs of the  
 “ origin may not disgrace the then illustri-  
 “ ous ſtem. Thus, the method they uſe to  
 “ *live in poſterity* is the very cauſe of their  
 “ being carefully buried in oblivion. Had  
 “ they



“ they pursued a contrary plan and been  
“ sedulous to have continued their children  
“ in their primary situations, they would,  
“ long after their death, have been men-  
“ tioned with reverence, and brought for-  
“ ward as the honorable head of their fa-  
“ mily.

“ And now to hazard a few observations  
“ upon old maids—a subject upon which I  
“ with some person of abilities would write  
“ at large; as it never yet, I think, was  
“ properly treated in any publication ex-  
“ tant.

“ Shall I, my dear, on this occasion en-  
“ ter upon the greatness of my own disap-  
“ pointment?—display the merits of the  
“ excellent young man to whom I was to  
“ have been united?—or describe the vio-  
“ lence of my grief on being told (perhaps  
“ rather too suddenly) of the accident which  
“ put a period to his existence two days  
“ before the one appointed for the wedding  
“ ceremony? No : I purposely avoid it.  
“ I always did. At first—because I could  
“ not

“ not bear the repetition : latterly—because  
“ I did not wish to be an instance that old  
“ maids love to boast of their former court-  
“ ships.

“ I need not tell you how easy, *since my*  
“ *grief has been mellowed*, I have found the  
“ single state ; nor need I *boast* that I have  
“ continued in it from choice. . . All this you  
“ know, and that I *now* can smile at the  
“ sarcasms cast upon our sisterhood ; there-  
“ fore when I reprobate the contumelious  
“ treatment it frequently meets with from  
“ empty heads, it will not be supposed I do  
“ it as a *retort*. My intention is to endeavor  
“ to rescue several suffering individuals from  
“ the pressure of unjust, senseless, and, let  
“ me add, *immodest* censure. The title of old-  
“ maid is contemptuously given to all single  
“ women, without distinction, after—and,  
“ indeed, sometimes, before—their prime  
“ of life is past ; the indelicacy of which  
“ phrase seems to escape general observation ;  
“ yet, surely, its indelicacy is very striking.

“ To venture a little explanation—*why*  
“ is

“ is an old maid more contemptible than  
“ an old wife, if the disposition which keeps  
“ her so is not reproachable? It is strange  
“ that a young woman who prides herself  
“ upon delicacy, decorum and so forth—  
“ should chuse to have it observed that she  
“ thinks there is such prodigious difference  
“ between an old woman who *is* a maid  
“ and an old woman who is *not*! and yet  
“ I have known many prim and prudent  
“ girls who are looking out for husbands,  
“ throw, in scoff, this appellation upon those  
“ who are half a dozen years their seniors.  
“ Sometimes I have been ready to ask them  
“ if they could tell what occasions this dis-  
“ similarity between two individuals of the  
“ same sex and age—the one unmarried;  
“ the other married, or had been; and  
“ whether they were under any *fear* of  
“ continuing maids much longer.

“ When, indeed, the motive of living  
“ single is such as these scoffing girls—  
“ three of whom I have in view—are  
“ actuated by (that is to say of not marry-  
“ ing

“ ing till they can thereby rise to a higher  
“ sphere) then will I join in all the re-  
“ proach that can be inflicted. But when  
“ a continuance in the single state, till too  
“ late to think of quitting it, is occasioned  
“ by an unwillingness to leave an afflicted  
“ parent—as in the case of Mrs. Ann Selby  
“ —when by the injurious treatment of a  
“ designing libertine—experienced by the  
“ truly amiable Mrs. Jane Stanhope—by  
“ the severity of a stern father ; which pre-  
“ vented Miss Egerton from being Mrs.  
“ Phillips ; and, let me add, when by such  
“ a sudden stroke of Providence as I have  
“ felt, or by any causes similar to these—  
“ how *unjust*, how *cruel*, and, sometimes,  
“ how *painful* is the reproach for not being  
“ so happy as many others of our species !!  
“ It brings to our remembrance, and we  
“ experience over again, the severity—the  
“ injury—the affliction, which darkened  
“ the days of our youth. How barbarous  
“ —how bitter, let me repeat, are these un-  
“ merited sarcasms ! If they are given by  
“ the

“ the young and gay, let them, as I before  
“ said, take care that *they* are not added to  
“ the list of ancient spinsters : if by those  
“ of our sex who are happy in a conjugal  
“ life, the implication of their triumph for  
“ their own lucky escape, is not very indi-  
“ cative of a delicate mind ; a feeling heart,  
“ or a wise head. To speak decisively—  
“ reproaches upon this state of females can  
“ only be thrown out, whether generally  
“ or individually, by the most foolish of  
“ either sex ; but when a *woman* is the  
“ taunting reviler, the folly appears with  
“ double glare, and when uttered in the  
“ presence of those who have any share of  
“ either wisdom or goodness, must render  
“ her truly contemptible.

“ There are some, though I believe not  
“ many who, without being apparently dis-  
“ agreeable, seem to be wanting in the *at-*  
“ *tractive* quality, and who have but few,  
“ if any opportunities of marriage : others,  
“ by loss of fortune, are prevented from re-  
“ ceiving offers of this kind ; want of gene-  
“ rosity

“rosity in their former—and fear of refusal  
“in their present equals, keeping them at  
“a distance. All these, if they have any  
“wish for connubial happiness, are surely  
“more proper subjects for sympathy than  
“for ridicule! Let empty scoffers en-  
“deavor to form an idea of what many  
“amiable women of this class must feel at  
“such unkind treatment, and then, if they  
“have the least feeling either of benevo-  
“lence or of shame, they must condemn  
“their own senseless and truly despicable  
“raillery.

“There is another *genus* of females  
“which, I think, are literally to be distin-  
“guished by the appellation of MISAN-  
“THROPISTS. Such are those who, dead  
“themselves to all soft sensibility, despise  
“the gentler passions, and suppose it a re-  
“proach to yield to affection. Whether  
“spinsters or wives—for these creatures  
“will sometimes marry for a convenient si-  
“tuation—they think it, I believe, im-  
“modest to profess an approbation of the  
“conjugal

“ conjugal life ; and thus give a much  
“ greater proof of the real grossness of their  
“ ideas than of their purity.

“ That ‘ marriage is a duty whenever it  
“ can be entered upon with prudence,’  
“ has long been an established maxim ; and  
“ I must confess it appears to me that wo-  
“ men of the last description, are not calcu-  
“ lated to make either good wives, mothers,  
“ sisters, or friends, as they must necessa-  
“ rily want that *pliancy* of disposition, with-  
“ out which no woman can be truly ami-  
“ able. Where nature, in this particular,  
“ has shown herself a step-dame, the in-  
“ dividual ought to be exempt from cen-  
“ sure ; but where, as it too often happens,  
“ pride and peevishness are encouraged  
“ till they extirpate the social qualities,  
“ the term of old-maidishness (in the com-  
“ mon acceptation of the phrase) is equally  
“ applicable to the young and the aged ;  
“ the single and the married ; for these  
“ species of women do not love their own  
“ kind, but lavish the remains of fond-  
“ ness,

“ nefs, implanted by nature to produce  
“ harmony in the World, upon cats; dogs;  
“ parrots; monkeys, &c. &c. Thus old  
“ maids in general, are said to delight in  
“ these creatures, because the clan of fe-  
“ males, eight out of ten, which I have  
“ described, chusing to live single, usually  
“ select some of them as companions, with  
“ which they think themselves happy, se-  
“ cluded from the society of their fellow-  
“ creatures.”

“ I have done wrong in totally confin-  
“ ing my observations respecting this de-  
“ structive turn of mind; to my own sex,  
“ because there are men (though not, I  
“ think, in such abundance) of the same  
“ description; but whether they are male  
“ or female that take it upon themselves to  
“ boast of disinclination to conjugal fel-  
“ city—condemning matrimony in twenty  
“ opprobrious epithets—depend upon it  
“ there is something extremely wrong in  
“ their heads or their hearts, and a gross  
“ impurity in their ideas. Let all such in-  
“ quire



“quire, who was matrimony’s institutor.

“And then, if they dare, let them arraign

“the institution. In pure ages of the

“world, it was not considered as a subject

“to cause a blush on the delicate cheek.

“Why is it now? The answer is plain.

“The World is grown corrupt.

“After having professed myself an ad-

“vocate for matrimony, it may fairly be

“asked why, after the sense of my loss in

“my dear Edgar’s death was worn to a

“*pleasing remembrance*, I did not think of

“entering into a state of which I have so

“high an opinion.

“My reply is ready.

“For a great length of time after that

“afflicting event, my ideas were too ro-

“mantic for me to think it possible I

“could ever love any other man; but I am

“convinced those ideas were erroneous.

“When my belief of the *impossibility* was

“removed, my delicacy—false delicacy my

“dear—started up. A second attachment

“must not, I thought, be given way to.

“It

“ It was against all the rules of romance.  
“ Very wrong and very prejudicial are  
“ these sentiments to the younger part of  
“ our sex. If there be any truth in the  
“ opinion that no second love can equal a  
“ first, it can only be when such a first is  
“ meant as is fixed between the ages of  
“ fifteen and seventeen, which, generally  
“ speaking, is merely personal; and this,  
“ it is to be hoped, can *not* be experienced  
“ a second time, because it may be pre-  
“ sumed the young man or woman so pos-  
“ sessed, will be grown wiser before another  
“ opportunity of forming such an attach-  
“ ment offers. The affection formed after  
“ we arrive at years of some discretion, is,  
“ indisputably, the most rational; truly fer-  
“ vent, and durable. The MIND must  
“ have a larger share in its composi-  
“ tion: and though I may boast that mine  
“ was of this last description, yet I did not  
“ then consider that, notwithstanding it  
“ must be long before the traces of sorrow  
“ on the deprivation of the object of such  
“ a regard

“ a regard would be obliterated, there  
“ could not be any reason why, in process  
“ of time, a second attachment should not  
“ be formed upon the same basis, provided  
“ a similar degree of congeniality could be  
“ met with in another : therefore, young  
“ ladies pretending to delicacy on this  
“ score, do but prove, in some degree, the  
“ indelicacy—at least, the irrationality—  
“ of their first partiality, by declaring it  
“ had so much for its foundation that no  
“ mind, however nearly resembling, could  
“ please under any other appearance. Yet  
“ there are, let me confess, some objections  
“ to this rule ; for an instance—I have af-  
“ firmed that the affection I experienced,  
“ was not what I consider as personal, yet  
“ did my romantic ideas hold me very  
“ long indeed. A belief that a second en-  
“ gagement would be a slight to the me-  
“ mory of my Edgar, made me, for several  
“ years, resolutely refuse every overture ;  
“ nor was I convinced that I *ought* to have  
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“ entered the married state, till I had not  
“ the choice of any I could approve.”

Mr. Russell's task ended with the last sentence, as the remainder of the lady's letter solely related to the particulars of her niece's fortune and situation.

A perfect silence prevailed while the gentleman was reading, and after he finished, the company looked round upon each other ; some with consciousness ; some with reproof, and some with triumph. Mr. Spencer then summed up the evidence, and pointed to the delinquents, the magnitude of their crime in oppressing with undue sarcasms any class of people. But the language of the good man was the language of lenity ; and though it was evident that he meant what he said, the native smile of urbanity, which irradiated his countenance, gave such a liveliness to the subject that he convinced, without paining his auditors. Indeed, whenever he spoke upon any topic, every one turned an attentive ear, expect-  
ing

ing both pleasure and information from his conversation ; and they never were disappointed. The old and the young ; the grave and the gay, were alike gratified by every thing which he said. That it was or was not Mr. Spencer's opinion, was the decision to almost every argument raised in the vicinity ; at least, amongst the good and wise part of the inhabitants. There were some, indeed, who were said to " worship " the rising sun." A term, gentle readers which we used once before, and which is applied to a set of sycophants who cringe and fawn to those who appear to be coming into power.

Mr. Spencer was forty-seven when he was left sole protector to his infant grandchildren, consequently, as a sagacious calculator will easily discover, must at the present period be near eighty years of age, on which account, notwithstanding the perfect soundness of his constitution, and the unimpaired excellency of his intellects, his friends could not but fear that ere the lapse  
E 2 of

of many years, they must suffer a deprivation which they dreaded to encounter. But whether he died or lived, the Percivals were looked up to as those who would soon be possessors of the village and environs; and be sovereigns of all around. This Mrs. R. Percival never failed to imprint upon the ideas of those with whom she visited, or, by other means, conversed; and the air of haughty authority which accompanied her intimations on this head, scarce ever failed to raise a sigh in the breast of the hearers, who, ten out of a dozen, lamented that the estate was to go from the Spencers. There were, indeed, some few creatures who feared more than they loved, the venerable ancestor, and had *ferreted* themselves into favor at the Lodge, that looked forward with *real* pleasure to the expected ensuing revolution at the Aviary; hoping that by a continuance of fawning and flattery, they should then triumph over those who now for their virtues and good qualities were there distinguished and caressed.

reſſed. Amongſt the foremoſt of theſe ſycophants, ſtood Mrs. Quaintly, whoſe name we have before mentioned in the courſe of our hiſtory.

Mrs. Quaintly was a widow who lived at Beverly in a genteel ſtyle, although her huſband, only a few years before, had died inſolvent. Superadded to her jointure, it was generally believed that ſhe was poſſeſſed of a conſiderable ſum which ſhe had managed to ſecret from the creditors, and that, in her opinion, could not be a crime, as it was not in her power to commit ſin.

Far be it from us to quarrel with any man on the ſubject of religion. Let all praſtiſe that form of worſhip which they are perſuaded is a right one; but againſt the doctrine of election and reprobation; which blaſphemouſly ſets forth the GOD of truth and purity, as the author of ſin, we warn every human being, as it is, in our opinion, one of the moſt dangerous, and if perſiſted in, deadly deluſions which the grand enemy of the human race ever

ventured to spread abroad. But Mrs. Quaintly was, or professed to be, of a different way of thinking from us. She affirmed her own election, and she pronounced Mr. Stephen Percival to be a babe of grace, at the same time that she shrugged her shoulders; shook her head; lifted up her eyes, and heaved a sigh, whenever Mr. Spencer was mentioned as a good man. “Poor creature!” she once said; “he may do what he will, but he never, never was elected amongst the chosen!”

When the Percivals were the subjects of conversation—“Aye *that* family,” exclaimed she, “is indeed favored! GOD fights for them. Mr. Edward Spencer’s first born child—poor reprobated babe, now in torments!—was taken from this World, that the desire of its great grandfather, to the prejudice of dear Madam Percival, might not be carried into effect. Grace,” added she, “hovers round the Lodge. I feel holiness whenever I set my foot upon its boundaries.”

Thus



Thus talked Mrs. Quaintly ; and thus she persuaded Mrs. R. Percival to think that she believed : but in this instance she was not a self-deceiver. Her conscience contradicted her assertions when she advanced them either to depreciate the Spencers or to exalt the Percivals.

And now we will conclude this chapter by returning to the hospitable board at the Aviary, where the remainder of the day was spent in harmony ; so efficacious had been Mr. Spencer's judicious and benevolently-intended strictures upon the letter which Mr. Ruffel had been reading to the company.

## CHAP. XL.

*Bitters and Sweets : the latter prevalent.*

**F**OR a considerable time after the period at which we made the last section, affairs went on with apparent smoothness. The attachment between Miss Montague and Mr. Seymour, was now known to every body, but not avowedly noticed by any one. The friends of the juvenile pair, were extremely pleased when they contemplated the probable happiness of such a union ; for never were two human beings more entirely formed for each other. Both distinguished for beauty and uncommon elegance of person : both eminent for understanding, and other mental endowments. In short, they seemed designed by nature to be united ; for in no other individual could either meet with an equal.

The Percivals beheld the attachment with every sentiment of disapprobation ;  
but

but they did not deem the time of their residence at Spencer-Aviary a proper period to express their intention of separating souls so paired: yet they constantly meditated a breach between them; and in their private conversations on the subject, made a determination not to permit their sentiments to be known till their return to the Lodge; and even then to adopt a secret method of proceeding. Stephen Percival projected the plan, to which all the conspirators readily agreed. Peace and pleasure, therefore, presided over every day, and every individual seemed sedulous to promote the general happiness.

As Mr. Edward Spencer's family was almost continually at the Aviary, the friendship between Harriet Montague and Lucy, was every day more strongly cemented: they were seldom divided in their waking hours; but they could not obtain permission to sleep together, for Mrs. Percival constantly adhered to her resolution of detaining the lovely orphan for her bed-

fellow ; nor could she, even for one night, depart from that determination. The reason which she gave for her inflexible observance of this rule, was, the promise that she made to her daughter upon her death-bed, that she would not, after Harriet should be capable of receiving moral impressions, trust her out of her sight for more than twelve hours together; a request, Mrs. Percival observed, which naturally arose from a sense of her own indiscretion, in taking advantage of her mother's too unlimited allowance of liberty, to elope with Captain Montague; from which, Mrs. Percival said, she herself had experienced so much regret, that she exceeded Mrs. Montague's request, by promising her to make Harriet her constant bed-fellow, and to keep her as continually in her sight as possible, during the time of her being under her protection.

This proceeding of the dowager's, met with different constructions from different people. Some attributed it to her compunction

punition for the cruelty with which she had treated her daughter, and that she was determined to recompense her by taking particular care of her offspring : others, who clearly saw that she had not any real affection for the lovely girl, imputed it to the ill-natured motive of depriving her, as much as possible, of the happiness which she found in the company of her juvenile friends ; but whatever was the cause, the effect was evident. Harriet, by this whimsey, or whatever the reader pleases to call it, of Mrs. Percival's, was very little more than a prisoner at large ; on which account, the interviews between the lovers were not very frequent ; for notwithstanding the silence which every one observed upon the subject of their mutual attachment, they were conscious that it could not be, in every instance, concealed ; and they remembered the conversation that passed in the alcove between the dowager, her daughter-in-law, and Mrs. Mitchel, respecting the premeditated union between Miss Percival and

Mr. Seymour. They were therefore, in some degree, instinctively cautious in their manner and conduct; for well were they both convinced, that Miss Montague was not cordially beloved by any of the Percivals, but George; and that all the rest of the family were subtle and designing.

About the period at which we now chuse to be arrived, a visit to Bullion Bower was proposed; and Mr. and Mrs. George Abington, and Mr. Spencer, thought it right to join in it, as they had not returned the last compliment which the Nabobs had paid to the family at the Aviary, and not thinking it right to exempt any particular people from their acquaintance. They accompanied, therefore, Mr. and Mrs. R. Percival; the two Misses; Mr. Stephen; Robert, and Mrs. Mitchel to the Bower; leaving at the Aviary Mrs. Percival; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Spencer; their three daughters; Mr. and Mrs. Abington; Miss Abington, and Miss Martha; Mr. Russell; Mr. Barker, and George Percival (who  
could

could not be persuaded to join in the visit to Mr. Bullion's), with our darling Miss Montague, and Mr. Seymour.

Leaving the party that went to Bullion Bower, to themselves, and thinking that we shall find more entertainment by continuing at the Aviary, we will observe, that just before the usual tea-drinking hour, a coach arrived at this mansion from the village, with some elderly and young ladies, attended by two gentlemen on horseback. After tea, cards, of which Mrs. Percival was very fond, were proposed, and produced. Two tables were filled by the serious part of the company, while the young ones entertained themselves with a walk in the pleasure-grounds. The evening was fine and inviting, and they rambled to a considerable distance from the house, where they seated themselves in an alcove, and were engaged in very pleasant conversation, when a messenger arrived from Mrs. Percival, with orders for Miss Montague to return to the house immediately. When  
the

the servant delivered his embassy, which he seemed to do with an appearance of concern, Harriet looked alarmed; which Lucy Spencer and Mr. Seymour observed, and were alarmed likewise, both catching Miss Montague's apprehension of some intended severity from Mrs. Percival. The amiable girl, however, without delay, obeyed the mandate, and met with the unkindness she expected, on account of her having forgotten to re-deliver the key of a drawer, into which the old lady had, a few hours back, ordered her to deposit some papers which she had been perusing.

Mrs. Percival's unkindness had, at this time, a more than usual effect upon our fair one. Perhaps for this reason—she had been particularly happy and high in spirits during the greatest part of the day, and it is probable that the sudden change of scene rendered her more susceptible of its gloom than she would have been, had it appeared at some other period. When Mrs. Percival ceased chiding, and left her by herself, she



she burst into tears, and not being in a disposition to enjoy the conviviality of the friends whom she had left in the alcove, she turned into the grove that surrounded the habitation of the feathered choristers, and seated herself upon a sofa formed of moss, in almost the centre of that beautiful place.

Miss Spencer, watchful for the return of the friend of her heart, caught sight of her as she left the house, and following her with her eye, saw her direct her steps to the Aviary, from which she concluded her having met with something unpleasant from Mrs. Percival. Drawing Mr. Seymour aside, she communicated to him her conjectures, and requested him to explore the cause of her dear Harriet's seclusion.

The request was unnecessary. The moment he knew that she was retired to the grove, he determined to follow her, and appeared in her view, while she was ruminating upon the infelicity of her situation, which

which just then showed itself in its darkest colours.

“ My Harriet in tears !” said the ardent youth, as he flew to approach her—“ What can have occasioned this afflicting appearance ?”

He seated himself beside her as he spoke, and supported her with his arm, while she reclined her face upon his shoulder, almost unconscious of the freedom, and wept afresh.

He pressed her to his bosom with fervency, and half forgot that she was in distress; but quickly alive to a sense of her feelings, with anxious tenderness he entreated to know the cause of her evident unhappiness.

She now soon relieved him by telling him, that it was not any thing either new or uncommon; that her grandmama had indeed been very angry with her, and that her displeasure, she knew not why, had affected her more than usual.

The conversation now took a turn, which  
amply

amply consoled Miss Montague for Mrs. Percival's unkindness. Seymour, in the most delicate manner, endeavoured to lead her ideas to the time of her exchanging Beverly for Martin's Priory, and hoped that the domestic felicity, which it would be the study of his life to ensure to her, would make her forget that she had ever known a previous unhappy hour.

The lovely Harriet blushed with gratitude, which, uniting with the affection it increased, impelled her, in hesitating language, to make some acknowledgment of her sentiments.

Seymour listened with delight, but was afraid to thank her for the felicity she afforded him, lest his expression of it should occasion her to shrink into reserve. She therefore continued—"When I reflect  
" upon the smallness of my fortune"—

"Let it not once be named," said he, hastily interrupting her. "I cannot hear  
" any thing from you with such a preface.  
" Do not even think of it, except you wish  
" to

“ to evince, that were the pecuniary balance  
“ on your side, you would turn your choice  
“ to another direction.”

“ Oh no,” replied Harriet, eager to exculpate herself from the most distant supposition of such ingratitude, and scarce knowing what she said ; “ if I—if you—” Recollection stopped the progress of her words. She withdrew her eyes, which she had unconsciously fixed upon those of her Henry ; blushed ; trembled at her own temerity ; looked down, and continued silent.

It was no longer in Mr. Seymour’s power to restrain his raptures. He clasped the lovely girl in his arms, and pressed her lips : but respect was so united with his ardor, that it could not offend the most pure and delicate mind.

“ And would my Harriet—” said he, after a silence of some moments—“ would she prefer her Henry in any situation ?  
“ She would,” he continued, “ if she now honors him with her approbation ; for  
“ situation

“ situation could not create any change in  
“ a heart like her’s. I ask not for want of  
“ conviction, but that the remembrance of  
“ the dear confession may solace the future  
“ hours of absence.”

Miss Montague’s situation was now too affecting for the susceptibility of such a mind as her’s. The period seemed awful. Had she been capable of making a reply, she would have been afraid of trusting her voice, which she was assured would have too evidently betrayed her emotions. At this juncture, the appearance of Lucy at one of the side glades, gave her considerable relief. Mr. Seymour’s eyes were fixed upon Miss Montague’s face; and he saw not Miss Spencer approach, till Harriet, raising her head, mentioned her name.

“ Tell me,” said the kind girl, as she advanced, “ do I interrupt you? If I do—”

“ *Indeed* you do not,” hastily replied her partly conscious friend. “ We were—  
“ we

“ we were,” she stammered, “ just going—  
“ soon going to leave—”

She could not proceed. Ever a firm adherent to the strictest truth, in the most arduous cases, Harriet could not finish a sentence which was only half sincere. It was true, that the thought of leaving the grove had occurred; and it is probable, that had not Miss Spencer appeared, she would soon have arisen from her seat; but she could not answer it to herself to make the assertion.

“ Miss Spencer,” said Seymour, and held out his hand to their mutual friend, who just then seated herself on the other side of Harriet, “ I have been endeavour—  
“ ing to lead the views of our beloved Miss  
“ Montague beyond the present disagree-  
“ able circumstances in her situation, by  
“ holding out a prospect of the time when  
“ you, I hope, will increase my happiness  
“ by considering Martin’s Priory as a  
“ second home.”

“ Indeed, Mr. Seymour,” returned Lucy,

“ I am

“ I am quite impatient for the arrival of that  
“ period, and was this very morning regret-  
“ ting your good father’s solicitude for your  
“ welfare, the effect of which, as I was  
“ yesterday told, protracts the term of your  
“ minority a year beyond the usual period.  
“ Pray is this a true circumstance ?”

“ It is, madam,” replied Mr. Seymour ;  
“ and it is a circumstance which has given  
“ me great concern ever since I—”

“ Pray,” interrupted Harriet, rather  
pained by the subject, “ do not let us  
“ talk of these things now. I have not,  
“ upon the whole, any great reason to com-  
“ plain of my situation, which may perhaps  
“ in time grow better.”

“ Dear, patient girl !” said Lucy, “ you  
“ are an example for every one to follow.  
“ But let us talk of Martin’s Priory. I  
“ wish, Mr. Seymour, it was not so far  
“ from Beverly.”

“ The distance,” replied he, “ is trifling.  
“ Besides, Beverly will not always have the  
“ charms for you that it now has.”

“Why that is true,” said she. “When  
“Mr. Stephen Percival is master of the  
“village, I shall not like it so well. Yet  
“it is, in itself, a beautiful spot, and I  
“should wish you and Harriet to live near  
“it. But I believe we must quit the grove,  
“as our party is returned to the house,  
“where I asked Matilda to entertain the  
“company in the music-room till I came  
“for you, that we might altogether make  
“our appearance in the drawing-room.”

“Obliging Miss Spencer”—and

“Kind Lucy”—at the same instant escaped the lips of Mr. Seymour and Miss Montague, who accompanied their amiable friend to the musical party, and soon after to the drawing-room, where they found the company at cards, at which they continued till the return of the party from Bullion Bower.



## CHAPTER XLI.

*The Letter.*

**D**URING the remainder of the period in which the Percivals resided at Spencer-Aviary, our young lovers were favored with a few more interviews similar to the tender one which appeared in our last chapter, yet they were often disappointed, by intervening incidents, when circumstances in general rendered it probable that they might meet without observation.

Whether the Lady Fortuna (to whose blind administration we do not, however, mean to subscribe) wished to increase their affection by the difficulties which she spread in their progress; or whether, considering the cruelty of her future intentions respecting them, she purposely prevented their too frequently experiencing such happy hours, as when recollected would  
only

only sharpen the poignancy of their distress, that we do not pretend to determine; but too sure it is that their removal from Spencer-Aviary annihilated every hope of their sublunary felicity, for shortly after that event, which took place as soon as the new Lodge was in the least degree habitable, the young gentlemen were sent to college, where they had been only a short time before the Percivals succeeded in their designs.

The steps which were taken to effect the separation we will proceed regularly to relate; beginning with an artful plan of Mrs. Mitchel's which was too successful.

Just before the Percivals left the hospitable abode of Mr. Spencer, the female part of the family were sitting one morning in the library at work; the gentlemen being gone upon a fishing party, and the ground too wet, from the preceding day's rain, to permit the ladies the pleasure of accompanying them. In the course of the morning, the ci-devant governess took down a  
book

book to read to the company. It was a novel that had been much celebrated, and the principal story, that of a young lady who had been prevailed upon to admit the addresses of a gentleman for whom she had a moderate esteem, but to whom she could not give her affection. At the decease of her father she was therefore determined to put an end to the engagement, and wrote him a letter declarative of her intention, which letter Mrs. Mitchel artfully made a subject of debate, saying that it was not proper for the occasion. Mrs. R. Percival, as had been concerted, approved of it; Mrs. Mitchel pointed out its defects, and said she was sure any young lady present could indite a much better.

This scheme was so well conducted, that the juvenile fair ones were desired to write such a letter upon the subject as they would think a proper one were they in a similar situation. They obeyed; and Miss Montague, really feeling the subject in its fullest extent, wrote in very forcible language,

guage, which Mrs. Mitchel thought proper to commend in very warm terms, but, pointing out what she chose to call errors in style, she interlined it with supposed amendations, and desired Miss Montague to copy it fair, with the alterations, as she said she would lay it before the gentlemen for their opinion. To this Harriet made great objection, but Mrs. Percival, with a stern countenance commanded her to do as Mrs. Mitchel required. Harriet then with a trembling hand obeyed, and Mrs. Mitchel declared herself perfectly satisfied with the performance.

The ingenious novel-reading critics of this brilliant age, who hunt "for fun and story," and put up a contemptuous lip at any sentimental interruption, however improving, will from their habit of developing the intricacies of a plot, presently conjecture that this letter was used for a purpose very different from that which was pretended to the lovely writer. It was : it was made an instrument of separating the  
lovers

lovers—of occasioning more distress to their susceptible hearts than it is in the power of our fashionable readers to imagine: for this last mentioned class are invulnerable to tender sensations: their bosoms are steeled by an attention to modish propriety; and if their clothes are made in a tonnish style; put on with a tonnish air, and they themselves dignified with being deemed tonnish people, their *summum bonum* is attained; and they laugh at the folly and stupidity of those tasteless creatures who, without emulation, meanly sit down contented with the possession of rational, domestic, and conjugal felicity; considering them as being unworthy of their acquaintance, though it should happen, as indeed it generally is the case, that they have in a high degree the pre-eminence over themselves in every good and great quality.

When the letter above mentioned was completed, the party separated, and Lucy Spencer retired with Harriet to her chamber, where they agreed in condemning the

alteration made by Mrs. Mitchel in the manuscript. Lucy, who had been particularly pleased with what her friend had written, requested to have the original copy, which she again read with repeated expressions of surprise that the governess should require any amendment.

We think that our female friends would give their approbation to the letter of which we are treating, but as it will appear in another place, we request them to suspend their curiosity till the arrival of a distant period ; of a period which gave pain to some of the best of human hearts. We will now only say that Mrs. Mitchel seemed to forget making such a use of Harriet's performance as she had declared she intended to do, as nothing was mentioned about it to the gentlemen.

## CHAPTER XLII.

*To the Right Honorables the Critics. A Preface-general to all Publications in the present Century.*

AS we mean very soon to take our leave of Spencer-Aviary, we will once more introduce our loving subjects into the great drawing-room, which, upon a particular occasion, was filled with almost all the ladies in the vicinity, who had left nearly an equal number of gentlemen in the dining-room.

My female readers will immediately see in their "mind's eye" the assemblage of old and young; beauties and no beauties; all dressed in a fashionable style, walking in little parties, from one end of the room to the other, till they disposed themselves to expect the arrival of tea, coffee, and the gentlemen. But previous to their appearance, some of the sentimental visitants began a

F 3

conversa-

conversation upon reading, writing and other sedentary amusements, which led to the mention of a work that had then lately been published by Miss Symonds, a young lady whose labors supported a mother of advanced age; her fortune, which chiefly consisted of houses in London, having been lost by a dreadful conflagration about two years before.

“ I think,” said Lady Lorimer, “ Miss Symonds’ publication is not only entertaining, but very instructive. Never before was I so pleased with anything written under the appellation of a novel.”

“ Dear madam!” exclaimed Miss Ballmin, “ I wonder your ladyship can think so. I protest it is the dullest stuff that ever was printed. — Instructive indeed! I am sure I know as much as Miss Symonds can tell me; and as to entertaining—why there is nothing entertaining in it.”

“ There is not in it anything romantic,” returned Lady Lorimer, “ nor anything improbable.”



“probable. No fairies, ghosts or witches,  
“and that perhaps is the reason why ladies  
“with a peculiar turn of mind may not  
“think it entertaining.”

“For my part,” said Miss Jenny Stanton,  
“I shall not *say* much about it, but  
“I know what I think. I have a respect  
“for Miss Symonds, and I expected some  
“amusement from her works, but—”

She said no more. The BUT explained  
her very friendly sentiments, which Miss  
Belina pursued by expressing her wonder  
—her absolute *astonishment* at Lord Elm-  
wood’s having read all the volumes *quite*  
*through*; adding—“I think them a heap  
“of stuff, and not calculated to please  
“fashionable people.”

“Lord Elmwood *has* read the volumes  
“through, madam,” gravely replied Lady  
“Lorimer, “and his conduct to Miss Sy-  
“monds upon the occasion has been par-  
“ticularly expressive of genteel generosity.”

Just then entered young Mr. Egginton,  
who rubbing his hands together, advanced

to Miss Montague, and making an attempt at facetiousness, said—"Well madam! I suppose you have read Miss Symonds' fine work."

"I have Sir."

"O! well! and pray! it is *very* charming! *very* delightful! *sweetly* pretty! isn't it!"

"Indeed Sir," replied Harriet, not seeming to understand his irony, though a sarcastic smile of ill-nature made it evident, "I think it is. You have read it, I suppose."

"Who *I* Miss Montague! I read books of that description! No indeed! I have looked into one of them—just opened a page—and have seen enough to fix my opinion."

"Your sapience," returned the displeased, because generous Harriet, "is very great indeed, to see the merit or demerit of an author from just opening a page. I think you ought to be at the head of all English reviewers."

Some

Some others of the gentlemen now entered the room, but their entrance did not interrupt the subject for more than a minute, for Mrs. G. Abington continued it by saying to Mr. Ruffel—"We were talking Sir about the publication of Miss Symonds. Will you oblige us with your sentiments upon the subject?"

"What," asked young Mr. Perkins, preventing Mr. Ruffel's reply, "about the famous Beverly novel. O my fiars! I would not read it for a guinea an hour! Why it is worse than one of my father's sermons!"

"Impossible," said a shrewd old lady who had not before given her opinion; "impossible that, Mr. Perkins"—

She paused; Mr. Perkins alarmed, as he caught the apprehension of an approaching severity, anxiously asked what was impossible.

"That you Sir," continued the matron, artfully turning her evident meaning, "who are so celebrated for politeness and  
F 5 "gallantry,

“gallantry, should, in reality, think it  
“labor to peruse the production of a lady’s  
“pen!”

“O but madam!” said Mrs. Sayer,  
“Mr. Perkins has heard a certain favorite  
“fair condemn the publication, and that,  
“doubtless, determined his opinion. What  
“other reason can you give for his decla-  
“ration? He cannot, from his own know-  
“ledge, disapprove what he never exa-  
“mined.”

Mr. Perkins looked abashed.

“I think,” said Miss Biddy Bellair, with  
all her native pertness, “that the books in  
“question are quite under par.”

“You think!”—said a morose old sea  
officer, who had known and loved Miss  
Symonds’ father—“who gave *you* the  
“privilege of thinking? Pray, chick, learn  
“to peck before you attempt to take wing.  
“Sixteen years back your day-lights were  
“not open, and how should you—”

He was interrupted by Mr. Ruffel,  
who saw his gathering warmth, and wished  
to

to avert it. “That a Prophet has no honor  
“ in his own country,” said that gentle-  
man, “ is a truth generally allowed ; and  
“ in the present case, partly exemplified,  
“ and partly disproved, as though the work-  
“ with which Miss Symonds has obliged  
“ the world, is condemned by a few light  
“ readers, it is as highly extolled by people  
“ of taste and learning.”

“ But what,” asked Mr. Egginton,  
“ do the reviewers say about it Sir ?”

“ Upon my word, I do not know,”  
answered Mr. Ruffel ; “ nor do I think that  
“ to be a matter of final consequence.  
“ Some of our reviewers,” continued he,  
“ as they manage their business, are ex-  
“ tremely detrimental to the first dawnings  
“ of real genius. They do not distinguish  
“ between an *infant* writer and a mature  
“ one, but condemn the essays of the first,  
“ because they do not reach the perfection  
“ of the other ; by which means many a  
“ rising star drops and sets in endless night.

“ This, every lover of the liberal arts, must  
“ deplore as a real misfortune.”

“ Were reviewers in general to be more  
“ lenient in their strictures, and likewise  
“ more evidently impartial in their opi-  
“ nions, they might be of some service to  
“ the community, by pointing out to those  
“ who are unable to judge for themselves,  
“ what books it would be proper for them  
“ to purchase ; but certainly, without these  
“ restrictions, they are a detriment, rather  
“ than an advantage to the world, as a  
“ public unfavorable criticism, especially  
“ if given in sarcastic language (which  
“ every reviewer ought studiously to avoid),  
“ would deter a timid mind from ventur-  
“ ing a second essay, when perhaps by due  
“ encouragement, and the lesson of expe-  
“ rience, a genius might be nurtured to  
“ benefit society.”

“ But pray Mr. Ruffel,” asked Mr.  
Matson, “ do you not think general re-  
“ viewers necessary, to prevent our being  
“ imposed

“imposed upon by the efforts of fools and  
“pedants?”

“Imposed upon Sir! Is not every man  
“at liberty to purchase or not, what is  
“offered to public sale? And is it not  
“better we should be a little deceived in  
“what we buy, than that the injustice  
“which is often done to a work of merit,  
“should crush some deserving author—  
“some second Chatterton—and rob society  
“of his future instructions? Reviewers  
“would find an equal call for their publi-  
“cations, were they to exercise their  
“abilities chiefly in pointing out the  
“*beauties* of an author, leaving folly, except  
“when it is accompanied by vice, to pro-  
“claim *itself*. It requires *some* genius, let  
“me tell you, to write even what is called  
“a *bad* book. Very few of those who  
“condemn can amend; nor one in a  
“hundred write so well as the author they  
“reprobate. That many respectable gen-  
“tlemen are engaged in this work of  
“reviewing, I affirm from knowledge, and  
“they

“ they are very tender in expressing their  
“ disapprobation ; seldom condemning in  
“ toto, but delicately observing where im-  
“ provements might be attempted ; ex-  
“ cept when sentiments and opinions, of a  
“ tendency destructive to the welfare of the  
“ human race, are daringly exhibited to the  
“ public : books that are neither good nor  
“ bad, they leave unnoticed.”

Every one present had now something to say upon the publication in question. Some pointed out its beauties, others its defects. Lady Sardon (who was the Miss Jermyn that formerly attended the Misses Spencer as a governess, and who had been so fortunate as to secure the approbation of a worthy young Baronet) spoke of them in the highest terms of applause ; while Mrs. Willet declared they were, in her opinion, half as bad as the Bible.

Mrs. Willet was professedly that bold character termed a free-thinker, which we are apprehensive will not be thought very consistent with the fascinating delicacy that

we



we admire in the fair sex ; but Mrs. Willet scorned the gentleness of the mould in which nature had cast her, and assumed the infidel ; a choice which rendered her truly contemptible in the eye of the world, and would have precluded her entrance as a visiter into Spencer Aviary, had she been an inhabitant of the village ; but Mrs. Willet was introduced to our present company by Mrs. Lloyd, whose guest she had been for several days previous to the period at which we are arrived. Mrs. Willet's opinion was listened to and smiled at ; for her principles were known.

Mr. Ruffel now turned to a reverend bishop (who had arrived that morning upon a visit to Mr. Spencer, and who just then entered the room with that gentleman) and said “ My Lord you are come in good  
“ time to settle a dispute which has arisen  
“ in this company respecting Miss Symonds' late publication. Give us, as I  
“ know you have read it, your sentiments  
“ upon the performance. Every one pre-  
“ sent

“ sent will readily submit to your verdict.”

The dignitary of whom we are speaking, was an honor to the clerical character, and reflected lustre upon the mitre. He was a man of taste, learning, and politeness; and consequently was held in the highest general admiration: yet Miss Jenny Stanton whispered Miss Biddy Bellair, that it was impossible a man so little acquainted with the world should judge of a work which ought to be adapted to the amusement of the moderns. With a contemptuous air and a pouting lip she delivered her opinion, in which she was so unhappy as to be totally mistaken, the reverend gentleman (a circumstance she perhaps had never known) having lived many years of early life in some of the politeſt courts in Europe; where he was distinguished for his numberless great, good, and amiable qualities.

The Bishop had not been made acquainted with the foregoing debate, and therefore spoke his sentiments without the  
restraint

restraint under which his politeness might, perhaps have laid him, had he known the several opinions of the persons who had spoken.

Every ear was attentive when his Lordship replied to Mr. Ruffel in the following words.

“ The kind of books, my good friend,  
“ which you now mention, have not of  
“ late years, made much of my reading ;  
“ nevertheless, it is a mode of conveying  
“ instruction, by blending it with amuse-  
“ ment, that is often more effectual than  
“ the best precepts delivered in a more so-  
“ lid manner ; and it is a mode which has  
“ been adopted by almost all great authors  
“ from the earliest times, with success. I  
“ will not now insist upon the book of Job,  
“ as that may be thought going too far  
“ back. Many in this company have, doubt-  
“ less, read the preface to that admired  
“ production, entitled Pompey the Little.  
“ To that I refer you for my sentiments of  
“ novels in general. With regard to Miss  
“ Symonds’

“ Symonds’ publication, which was recom-  
“ mended to me by Doctor Blymhill, it can;  
“ I think, create but one opinion in readers  
“ of taste and real good understanding,  
“ which is, that it is one of the best of  
“ modern productions. The story is amusi-  
“ ing and interesting, without improbabi-  
“ lity. The language is elegant, because  
“ simple; and simplicity of style is more  
“ difficult than any other to attain, and is  
“ undoubtedly the most eligible for either  
“ writing or conversation. Shallow critics  
“ who attend more to sound than sense,  
“ prefer bombast; and think every sen-  
“ tence contemptible which is not crowded  
“ with words of many syllables, and the  
“ phrases in vogue. Other people are  
“ lovers of what they call fun, and if they  
“ are but furnished with story, whether  
“ probable or improbable, they care not  
“ for sentiment or morality. They are  
“ made to laugh: and they are pleased,  
“ though virtue itself is rendered the ob-  
“ ject of ridicule. To finish all, I will  
“ now

“ now say upon the subject, Miss Symonds,  
“ by her publication, has evinced her be-  
“ ing a real genius, and her work never  
“ can be mentioned with disapprobation,  
“ but by those who are destitute of taste,  
“ sentiment, and understanding ; as who-  
“ soever can comprehend its beauties  
“ (which are above the level of common  
“ capacities) will give it unreserved ap-  
“ plause.”

The prelate ended. Mr. Egginton stood mute : Mr. Perkins blushed : Mrs. Willet coughed : Miss Jenny Stanton lifted up her eyebrows : Miss Belina said “ All this  
“ may be true, but I won't believe it.” Miss Biddy Bellair drew up her lips ; and Miss Ballmin's face and neck were covered with crimson. The rest of the company thanked his Lordship for his judicious discriminations, and the subject terminated just as Miss Symonds appeared in the drawing room. She had been invited to dinner, but her tenderness for her mother would  
not.

not permit her leaving her earlier in the day.

Miss Symonds was received with universal smiles: her *friends* being *really* pleased to see her, and those who did not love her, choosing to *appear* as if they were, for though their envy stimulated them to depreciate her performance, their pride urged a declaration of being acquainted with her.

After the ceremony of tea was ended, the card tables levelled the abilities of Miss Symonds; Miss Montague; the Misses Spencer, &c. with those of Miss Ballmin; Miss Bellair; Miss Stanton; Miss Belina; Miss Bullion, and others of their class; and as these last-mentioned found themselves equal, and perhaps superior to the first in the science of whist, quadrille, or cassino, their spirits were quite exhilarated, and their conscious inferiority, in other respects, lay dormant.

It ought to be remarked of Miss Bullion  
that

that she classed herself with Miss Symonds' favorers. Not, it must be confessed, because she thought her performance a meritorious one, for she *protested* she had not given herself the trouble to peruse it ; but because the "*young woman*" did not pretend to be any thing more than she was. "She acknowledged her poverty;" and "she did not set up for a beauty; therefore *poor thing!* she had taken her *under her protection.*"

This was Miss Bullion's language when she spoke of Miss Symonds, and in company, the patroness was always ostentatiously evinced.

At a late hour the visitants separated; every individual pleased with the treatment he or she had received in the hospitable mansion.

## CHAP. XLIII.

*A long Farewel to Spencer Aviary.*

SOON after the period which finished the last chapter, Beverly new Lodge was declared to be ready for the reception of the Percival family, to the great concern of Miss Spencer ; Miss Montague, and her Henry. They seemed to foresee the approach of sorrowful hours, and expressed unavailing wishes that some event might intervene to lengthen the time of their residence at the Aviary. Matilda and Caroline Spencer were likewise very unwilling to part with Harriet ; as, indeed, was all the family ; and none more than Mr. Spencer himself, who beheld this lovely girl with admiration, and had imbibed for her a truly paternal affection. Very earnestly did he press Mrs. Percival to permit her continuance under his protection ; promising



misgiving to consider her as his child, and to make a handsome addition to her fortune. Mr. and Mrs. E. Spencer, Mr. Ruffel, and the Abingtons united in urging the same request; so greatly was Miss Montague beloved by them all, and so sincerely did they compassionate the severity of her situation, which was every day more and more evident to observation: but Mrs. Percival was invincible. “*Her promise to her dying, though undutiful daughter, must not be violated.*” “*When the girl was of age, she might dispose of herself as she pleased, as after that period, she should not think herself bound to take any trouble about her or her concerns.*”

Strange that Mrs. Percival should in this single instance pay such a regard to any precept of morality, as it was a truth well known where duty and interest contended, the sense of the first was lost in a pursuit of the other, which was always the principal point in all her prospects. What then could occasion her obduracy in the case in question.

question. It was an enigma to which none of the requesting party could give a solution; but as we love to indulge our loyal subjects with explanation of seeming mysteries, we will inform them that interest was likewise here her ruling passion; from which predominant instigator, and not from the promise she had given to her daughter upon her death-bed, arose her invincibility. She knew the favor in which Harriet stood with the united friends. She evidently saw, with displeasure, the rapid increase of their affection for her, and prophesied the abolition of some of her darling projects, should the fascinating girl ever be an inmate at Spencer Aviary, or with any other part of the family. Miss Bullion's union with her grandson Stephen, it was as she thought, beyond the power of accident to frustrate, as both parties would be bound by interest to keep to the stipulations, but she had less confidence in her grand-daughter Barbara's marriage with Mr. Seymour, though her wishes for that event were  
equally

equally ardent ; but being convinced of the young gentleman's attachment to Miss Montague, she was determined to break, if possible, its fervency ; which she well knew it would be difficult to effect, were Harriet to reside at the Aviary, as it was most likely her friends there would approve the affection between the lovely couple.

These, and other powerful reasons, determined the dowager not to be prevailed upon to relinquish her charge ; and she so strongly pleaded her engagement to her dying daughter, that though the Spencers thought she enlarged upon it with an unaccountable and unnecessary punctuality (as Mrs. Montague's maternal wishes could not have been frustrated by Harriet's residence in such an exemplary family) they desisted from enforcing their request, and Miss Montague returned to the Lodge. Her departure was sincerely regretted by those who continued at the Aviary ; but no one was sorry to be separated from the Percivals ; nor were they at all concerned

to leave the place, as they considered the time was hastily approaching, when they should return in triumph as sovereigns of the abode.

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## CHAP. XLIV.

### *A Tour.*

**A**BOUT the time of the separation of the families, the health of Mrs. E. Spencer seemed to be in a precarious state. Physicians were consulted, and a removal from place to place advised. A tour, therefore, through the northern parts of the kingdom was proposed, resolved upon, and soon put into execution.

About a year before this event, a distant relation of Mrs. Abington's, who had been instrumental to the misfortunes of her early life, died of a lingering complaint, and being sensible during his period of affliction, that he had been an oppressor of an  
amiable

amiable woman, left her son a considerable estate near Edinburgh.

Our readers may think themselves ill-treated, in not having been previously acquainted with this circumstance; but as it was not a circumstance of any great consequence, we reserved the intelligence for this opportunity.

There was upon the estate now mentioned, a neat little habitation, which it was thought advisable for Mr. G. Abington to visit and inspect; and likewise to look into the situation of the surrounding farms; the whole, from the time of the testator's death, having been left to the regulation of a steward. On this account it was determined that this place should be their last stage, where they were to rest till they found whether the Scotch air had a good or a bad effect upon the invalid.

The travelling party was to consist of Mr. and Mrs. E. Spencer; the three young ladies; Mr. and Mrs. G. Abington; Mr. Russell; Miss Abington, and Miss Martha.

During their absence, Mr. and Mrs. Abington the elder, were to reside at the Aviary with Mr. Spencer.

It was much wished that Miss Montague could have added to the number of the itinerants; but as it was known that this would not be permitted, it was not attempted.

All preliminaries settled, the travellers entered upon their route; pursuing their journey by short stages, and stopping at such places as most engaged their attention.

On the evening before their departure, the Percivals made a visit at the Aviary to take a formal leave, when Miss Patty Abington bade adieu to her dear friend Mrs. R. Percival, with a show of much reluctance.

The parting between Harriet and Lucy Spencer, was affecting in a high degree. They both wept; separated, and in an instant were again folded in each others arms.

“Farewel,

“Farewel my dearest Lucy.”

“GOD bless you my Harriet”—was scarcely articulated, when they forced themselves from each others embrace.

“I almost seem,” said Lucy, previous to their final separation, “as if I never more should see you. And what then would become of me !”

“Do not, my dearest girl,” said Harriet, “do not infuse an idea, which the present depression of my spirits renders me too liable to imbibe. May GOD restore to me the friend of my heart in health and peace !”

Lucy could not reply. She only sighed her union in the prayer ; nor could she appear with any degree of composure till a considerable time after the carriage was driven from the door.

## CHAP. XLV.

*A fashionable Groupe, and a Ball.*

THE time was now arrived for Mr. Seymour and the young Percivals to be entered at Cambridge. Pembroke Hall was the College chosen by Mr. Barker, he himself having there received his education; and Mr Percival submitted to him whatever, of this nature, respected the farther improvement of the young gentlemen.

The arrangements were completed with all possible expedition; the Percivals being now very urgent to hasten the departure of the tutor and pupils; alledging, that Mr. Seymour and Stephen had been too long kept at home; in consequence, as they said, of the late unsettled situation of the family. This, however, was but a plausible pretence for the delay: the Percivals were governed by other motives for postponing the above removal, which, for several reasons,



sions, perhaps obvious to the penetrating reader, they did not desire should take place during the period of their residence at Spencer Aviary.

As soon as Mr. Seymour was informed of the determination of his guardian to dispatch him to Cambridge, he sought, with all possible eagerness, to obtain a private interview with his Harriet; but he sought in vain: no kind opportunity favored his wishes: no friendly Lucy was at hand to facilitate his earnest desire of bidding his beloved Miss Montague a last adieu, without witnesses. Instead of Miss Spencer, Miss Percival was now a constant attendant upon Harriet, for whom she pretended a great increase of regard; affirming, that she never before was so sensible of her merits; as when Lucy was with her, Harriet refused to cultivate the intimacy of any other person.

These new professions, which no one could believe to be sincere, though Miss Percival played her part with admirable

G 4

dexterity,

dexterity, were very irksome to our favorite, who saw and united in her Henry's wish, and who, at this time, could not take pleasure in any indifferent company; chusing to spend by herself the hours, in which she was not necessarily engaged in the family-party, that she might uninterruptedly meditate on what was more agreeable to her than the present state of her affairs.

About a fortnight before the gentlemen left the Lodge, a very smart levy of young people, with one lady older than the rest, appeared in the village, and, as they were evidently *people of fashion*, attracted universal notice and admiration. They were visitants to a new settled family of the name of Wharton, the manners of which were more calculated for the meridian of the Lodge, than for that of the Aviary. Mr. and Mrs. Wharton *lived in style*. That is to say—breakfasted at an hour past noon; dined at seven; retired to rest, after a night spent in gambling, at three in the morning; laughed at country people; ridiculed their  
less

less fashionable neighbours ; played cards upon a Sunday ; talked of moral and sacred obligations as a jest, and sported with the infirmities and miseries of the indigent—who, “ *poor devils !*” looked like famine “ personified.”—This was their language ; and these, good Christian readers, are people of fashion—people—in modern phrase—*of much respectability* ; for, in addition to their other great, and we wish we could say rare accomplishments, they conversed with familiarity upon the actions of Dukes ; Dutcheffes ; Earls ; Countesses, &c. This completed their consequence with the Percivals, who, upon their return to the Lodge, took the first opportunity of paying their compliments to the new comers ; for as they had never appeared at Church, nor any other place of public worship ; but had, on the contrary, declared their non-observance of “ *such absurd—such ridiculous*” customs, they could not go with propriety during their residence at the Aviary, as it was not consistent with the exalted charac-

ters of the Spencers and Abingtons to be hasty in cultivating an acquaintance with people, however fashionable, or high in rank, who openly professed such sentiments.

The party arrived at Mr. Wharton's, consisted of Mr. Miss, and Miss Nanette Beever; Captain Millemont, and the honorable Mrs. Catharine Lumley. They all lived in high life, and were people of fortune.

Our gay readers would doubtless be greatly gratified by an account of the dress and particular conduct of these exalted personages, whose principles and opinions bore a *happy* similitude to those of the Wharton's, with whom they used to laugh at the slavish prejudices of vulgar education; but we have no leisure to attend minutely to any one of the tonnish groupe, except Captain Millemont, who at first sight of Miss Montague, commenced rival to Mr. Seymour.

Captain Millemont was a young man of considerable

considerable property in the East Indies. Nature had been lavish, to excess, in the formation of his person and understanding, for which favors he made a very ungrateful return to the donor, by employing, to the worst of purposes, the advantages which he had received. The destruction of female innocence, especially if beauty increased its allurements, constituted the business of his existence. The character which our cousin Richardson gave to his Lovelace, was the object of his emulation. He desired no greater praise than to be told, that in him this imaginary hero was realized. To such a destroyer as this, Miss Montague was a most alluring object. The moment he saw her he admired her; and in that moment planned what he intended to be her future destiny; having acquired from his former successes, too much confidence to doubt, in the present instance, of conquest and triumph. The beauty and elegance of his person were soon the theme of female conversation; his fortune; family,

and connexions, were inquired into and approved : his manners and understanding extolled ; and Captain Millemont, in the aggregate, was pronounced to be one of the finest gentlemen that ever appeared in Beverly. No one, perhaps, thought that he excelled Henry Seymour, but *he*, as was now generally known, was so devoted to his Harriet, that it was in vain for any inferior fair to endeavor to engage his attention while she continued in the vicinity. Captain Millemont, therefore, was the “ point in view ” at the ball, which, soon after the arrival of his friends, Mr. Wharton gave to all the gentry of the neighbourhood, at the Beverly assembly-room. Invitations were sent to every family of fashion, and tickets distributed, at Mr. Wharton’s request, by several gentlemen who were better acquainted with the neighbourhood than he himself was, at that period.

The day arrived. The assemblage was brilliant. Every young lady appeared in what she thought her most becoming attire.

Miss

Miss Bullion, amongst the rest, looked and moved like an enormous ingot of gold, studded with precious stones. The Percivals partook of her consequence, by being of her party, and treating her with familiarity.

Harriet Montague shone this evening—this fatal evening, with the mildest yet most fascinating lustre. The silver brightness of the moon is more applicable to her appearance than sol's refulgency; yet every following eye gave her the merited preference over all the glaring beauties in the assembly. Her dress was exactly adapted to her manners, and both were descriptive of the delicacy and elegance of her mind. Mr. Seymour contemplated the beauty of her figure with the ardency of genuine affection. He indulged the rapturous idea of constituting her future happiness—of the arrival of that period when she, without reserve, would acknowledge that she lived for him; and when all the world would know that she was his, and his alone.

In

In another part of the room stood Captain Millemont. He saw the blooming Harriet with no less emotion—no less fervency of imagination than did Henry Seymour; but far different was the end which he purposed to pursue.

Seymour was enraptured by the view of her being numbered amongst the most elevated and happy of her sex. Millemont meditated her wretchedness and final destruction; and yet he avowed himself to be actuated by love.

By love of what! Of himself? No: that would have taught him to pursue real happiness, whereas what he now determined upon must, some time or other, assuredly produce him real misery.

It is proper to observe that this was not the first time that our military hero had seen Miss Montague. She did not go with the Percivals to Mr. Wharton's, but she was present when they returned the visit, and then she struck the heart of this courtly swain.



“A contradiction in terms!” exclaims a little pedantic Miss. “A courtier cannot be a swain.”

Without condescending to reply to any of such a class, whose criticism let us observe (by way of an aside) we heartily despise, we shall proceed with our story, and re-assert that the courtly swain was struck to the heart by the first appearance of Miss Montague, whom, previous to the ball, he had again contrived to meet in an evening walk with the Misses Percival and Mrs. Mitchel; he himself being accompanied by the honorable Mrs. Catharine Lumley.

Captain Millemont was attended into the country by two servants who assisted in what he gloried to call his contrivances. The celebrated Lovelace was in this respect, as in most others, his example. As by means of these emissaries he received early intelligence respecting the character, fortune, and connexions of every person whose acquaintance he was solicitous to cultivate,

vate, he was soon informed of the attachment between Mr. Seymour and Miss Montague, and likewise of the views of the Percivals respecting their daughter Barbara. The knowledge of this last circumstance, one of Millemont's servants gathered from a waiting maid of the young ladies, whom he met by accident, at about the distance of a mile from the Lodge, to which he accompanied her; and during the walk, procured all the intelligence he wanted: but the event most facilitating to the schemes of Captain Millemont was Mrs Lumley's recognition of Mrs. Mitchel, with whom she had formerly had some acquaintance at Bath. These ladies very soon entered into each other's sentiments, which indeed were pretty similar upon many subjects; neither of them being fettered by the bonds of what old fashioned people call conscience.

Mrs. Lumley, madam—for I am now addressing myself particularly to your ladyship; though you will not, I hope, suppose that I am going to draw your resemblance  
—the

—the honorable Mrs. Catharine Lumley—was daughter to an Irish baron, from whom she inherited a very ample fortune; and being what is called a fine woman—a woman of spirit, and an universal PHILANTHROPIST, could not be prevailed upon by the vulgar arguments of virtue, to commit such an act of cruelty, as that of losing herself in matrimony must, in her case, have been deemed. Hundreds were dying for her; and the death of all but one (to whom, probably, the circumstance of her assent might have been still more fatal) must inevitably, have followed the event of her marriage. In indulgence, therefore, to her army of lovers, and perhaps also from some trifling consideration respecting herself, this lady chose to retain the name of her family, notwithstanding her abhorrence of the opprobrious appellation of old maid, with which she might reasonably think her choice would render her liable to be branded. Indeed it had been said that she had several times put in a caveat against  
the

the title, by undeniable proofs and witnesses ; but it was evident that she did not gain full credit to her right of rejecting the title, as she was frequently *hit in the teeth* with the sound of *old maid*, by those who were best acquainted with her. However she always turned off the stroke with a laugh ; and once, upon its being levelled against her by the celebrated Major Maurice, was heard to say, with an air of perfect good humor—"you know better ;" three words, simple in themselves, but when whispered about, as they were by the person whose auricular organs they accidentally reached, afforded matter of conversation to all the drawing rooms in the neighbourhood, and the lady was ever after ironically called the old maid by all her acquaintance.

Mrs. Lumley, now bordering upon fifty, lent a kind assistance to all young gentlemen and ladies who applied to her for advice, under the perplexities which are often attendant upon private amours. Captain Millemont well knew her abilities in the  
line

line of intrigue ; she having frequently befriended him when he had involved himself in intricacies. To her he applied in the present case, and the two worthies soon resolved upon a project which promised success.

Upon the information given by the servant that Mr. Seymour certainly *kept company*—for that is the vulgar phrase for a tender attachment—with Miss Montague, and that it was known to be the wish of the family to prevent the *match* from taking place, because it was thought that Miss Percival had a *liking* for the gentleman, Mrs. Lumley thought it expedient to commence an intimacy with Mrs. Mitchel upon the strength of their former acquaintance, and soon found her to be the very woman to assist in the projected business.

The ball room, which a few pages back, we left rather abruptly, was the scene, not of action but of planning the regulations of the intended siege. The two ladies perfectly understood each other's intention,  
which

which will be disclosed to our loving subjects by ensuing events. Mrs. Lumley departed pleased with the idea of the frolic; Mrs. Mitchel with assurances that her interest would be promoted by the assistance which she had undertaken to afford.

We will now return to the assembly that we may take a respectful leave of the company, which at this our second *entrée* we are to imagine was waiting the order of the master of the ceremonies to begin minuets. This gentleman, when everything was properly disposed, gave the word, and Mr. Beever made his first bow to Mrs. Wharton, and his second to the honorable Mrs. Catharine Lumley. Mr. Wharton then advanced to Miss Beever, and afterwards to Miss 'Nanette,' who performed in the most theatrical style imaginable, to the great admiration of many in the company.

Captain Millemont was now called for. But Captain Millemont could not be found. The fact was that he had withdrawn himself, intending not to return till he imagined

gined that it would be a proper period to request the manager to direct his dancing with Miss Montague, and he entered at a fortunate moment. As soon as he appeared he was entreated to walk up, and as Miss Percival and Miss Deborah ; Miss Bullion, and some others (the last mentioned with the graceful Henry Seymour) had figured away, Miss Montague was named to him without expressing his wish.

Captain Millemont excelled in this polite exercise ; and sure never woman walked the figure with such striking elegance as did his lovely partner. Every eye, attracted either by envy or admiration, was fixed to the conspicuous couple, and not an individual was desirous to appear after them, as no one had sufficient vanity to think of excelling or even of equalling their performance.

When Captain Millemont conducted Miss Montague to her seat, he requested the favor of her hand in country-dances. In polite terms she thanked him for the honor he intended her, but declined it ;  
telling

telling him that it was not her intention to dance any more that evening.

Harriet could not dance with her Seymour. They were both convinced that such an attempt would be productive of disagreeable consequences; and therefore, in a few moments of conversation at the commencement of the ball, mutually declined what would have given them both pleasure.

This conversation, short as it was, was the last which the lovers were permitted to hold, previous to the departure of Mr. Seymour; for after this evening, Harriet was desired to keep in her own apartment; the reason for which, will appear in a few pages. She told her Henry that except she was called upon for a minuet, she was determined not to dance at all, and most faithfully did she intend to keep that determination. Seymour wished that he could, with as much propriety avoid, joining in the amusement, and was endeavoring to find a plausible excuse for so doing, when Mr. Percival advanced with a stern countenance; interrupted their converse, and desired



desired Mr. Seymour to offer his hand, for the evening, to Miss Nanette Beever.

The youth obeyed, and with a heavy sigh left his beloved fair, to attend his guardian, who conducted him to the London Belle, by whom he was received with a smile of approbation.

After country-dances were began, Harriet walked into the card room and seated herself by Lady Lorimer, with whom she was beginning to enjoy as placid a conversation as the bustle of the place permitted, when Mrs. Percival approached her with Captain Millemont, and ordered her to join with him in the convivial throng.

At this mandate, Harriet blushed; trembled; and hesitated.

What would Seymour, who appeared greatly gratified by her declared intention of not dancing, think when he should meet her in the figure with Captain Millemont!

She could not hope for an opportunity to tell him the order which she had received, and she rightly conjectured he would

would never guess that any of the Percivals, who in general, wished to hide the lovely maid from observation, should command her to mix, with such a partner, in such an exercise; and lest the readers, likewise, should think the circumstance an unaccountable one, we will stop to say it was occasioned by Mrs. Mitchel, who, in consequence of the beginning negociation with Mrs. Lumley, had upon Harriet's refusal to dance, requested Mrs. Percival to take the above step; assuring her that it would probably be promotive of the wishes of the family, as she would soon be convinced.

Mrs. Percival did not immediately fall in with the proposal, but having considerable confidence in the talents and fidelity of Mrs. Mitchel, who re-assured her of the propriety of her measures, though she could not then explain the business, she complied with the request, and conducted the Captain to the object of his wishes; who, after a few moments hesitation, begged to be permitted to sit still.

The

The stern dowager put on a commanding countenance, and bid her obey. Harriet therefore arose, and the triumphant Millemont led her to the dance. Mr. Seymour being then almost at the bottom of near thirty couples, did not perceive her re-entrance into the room with Mrs. Percival, whose manner spoke the mandate she had imposed, or his surprise upon meeting her as he was going up, would not have been so great. When she first caught his sight, he started, and appeared scarcely to believe his eyes. She saw his emotion, and blushed from contending passions. Could she have spoken to him, she would have been easier; but that was impracticable, for Millemont saw the wish, and was determined to frustrate it; which he did, by being constantly at her elbow, according to Mrs. Mitchel's injunction, during the remainder of the evening.

Seymour's generous soul disdained suspicion; yet the native fire of his mind kindled an ardent desire to know the mo-

tive—the unaccountable motive, which induced his Harriet, contrary to her expressed determination, to join in the dance with Captain Millemont. Not one moment's sleep could he get through the night for thinking upon this perplexing circumstance. He endeavored to conclude she had, on some unknown account, acted properly, and in that belief, made an effort to forget the world; but the incident abruptly recurred, and his effort was rendered unavailing. Earlier in the morning than was customary, he appeared in the breakfast-room, with the hope of being able to catch a momentary opportunity of speaking to Harriet without observation; but his endeavors were vain. Harriet did not appear. Mrs. Percival had ordered her to confine herself to her own apartment, and she did not dare to disobey, though the order astonished and distressed her beyond what can be expressed. The reader, however, will not be surprised at the circumstance, when he understands that Mrs.

Mitchel

Mitchel had unfolded the scheme which, the evening before, had been concerted between herself and Mrs. Lumley. At the first opening of the business, the Percivals disapproved of the ladies intention, as it gave an idea of Miss Montague's marriage with Captain Millemont; an event which they would not have witnessed without great concern. They would, indeed, have been glad to have been rid of her, and to have had her removed to some other part of the kingdom, but not in the character of Mrs. Millemont. That would have been too elevated; for then she would have visited at Beverly; at Mr. Wharton's, and at the Spencers. Mrs. Mitchel was now rather surpris'd; but Mr. Percival; his mother; his lady, and his son Stephen, who were at the consultation, agreed in affirming that no plan could be eligible which would not effectually secure her from returning to the neighbourhood; and hinted that they would not stop at any obstacle to compass such a design; deploring

that her residence amongst them had ever been permitted. "However," said the dowager Mrs. Percival, "it is as it is, and we have now only to endeavor to avert every ill effect, by removing the cause."

"Which will not be done by the girl's marriage with Captain Millemont," rejoined her daughter in law.

"Certainly not," said Mr. Percival. "Except—" He stopped, and looked with earnestness at his mother, who sat deeply musing.

Mrs. Mitchel had by this time collected her ideas, and with the smile of appearing to know more than she said, answered Mr. Percival's last speech in the few following words.

"Captain Millemont's estate, you know Sir, lies in the West Indies. To that, having business there which demands his presence, he intends to repair when he has secured his prize. As to marrying—why—"

Knowing she had said enough, she said

no

no more, but paused ; looked down, and smiled.

A malicious grin of approbation marked the features of the four conspirators, who cast their eyes around upon each other for some moments, and then Mrs. R. Percival, with seeming inattention to Mrs. Mitchel's inuendo respecting non-marriage, repeated—"The West Indies ! Why to be sure  
" such a distance as that—But do you,  
" Madam, think there is a certainty of  
" his carrying the girl thither, if he can  
" secure her ?"

" No doubt of it. And after such an  
" event, there will not, I think, be any  
" great danger of her returning"—replied Mrs. Mitchel with a smiler.

The smiler went round.

" Well, but after all," said Mr. Percival,  
" it would be rather a cruel affair, except  
" matrimony—"

" As to that," interrupted his lady—  
" she must make her own market. To do  
" the girl justice, she has "*something* of a  
H 3 " face,"

“ face, and does not want sense ; though  
“ I do not think she deserves half the fuss  
“ some people make about her. But she  
“ has a great deal of cunning, and I dare  
“ say will manage to secure her man, when  
“ once she finds there is no other remedy.”

The attribution of cunning to our Harriet was as unjust as that of charity to a certain noble Lord, who, allowing his consort to expend, annually, large sums for the *unnatural* maintenance of several species of the brute creation, refuses an application from the child of an old friend, under the pretence of having forgotten there was such a being in existence ; though only a few years had elapsed since that very individual child had received an eulogium from his recently created lordship for having paid him a grateful compliment.

Unhappy nobleman ! we would stop to lament amongst other of thy imbecilities, thy weakness of memory, did not our anxiety for a favorite demand our attention to her distressed situation.

Harriet



Harriet Montague had no cunning in her composition. Pure unsuspecting artlessness, was a striking trait in her character. She neither designed nor apprehended any deceit, and therefore was not upon her guard against treachery; yet Mrs. R. Percival chose to intimate that she was naturally cunning. To her remark, no one made any reply. But after a pause, the dowager asked Mrs. Mitchel how the scheme, provided it was proved to be an eligible one could be put into execution, as Harriet's attachment to Mr. Seymour was too evident to afford any hope that she would listen to a recommendation of Captain Millemont.

“ Dear Madam !” said Mrs. Mitchel; “ you do not yet see half the design ! Permit me,” continued she, settling herself in her chair, as if for a long story, “ to unfold to you the particulars of the business.”

The auditors prepared themselves to listen with avidity, while Mrs. Mitchel spoke in the following words.

“ You know, my good and dear friends,  
“ how much I have at heart the interest of  
“ every individual of the name of Percival;  
“ therefore, being convinced you all earnestly  
“ wish for the union of Mr. Seymour  
“ with Miss Barbara, I very readily complied  
“ with Mrs. Lumley’s request of endeavoring  
“ to render Captain Millemont  
“ happy with Miss Montague, for whom  
“ she said he had conceived the most ardent  
“ affection. Mrs. Lumley confessed she  
“ did not think it probable the Captain  
“ would *at first* consent to put on conjugal  
“ fetters; for which she did not pretend  
“ much to blame him; but doubted not  
“ his being *faithful* to the lady; nor that  
“ he would, *in the end* unite himself to her  
“ by sacred ties; as except he should have  
“ a legal heir, the greatest part of his estate  
“ would go to a distant branch of his  
“ family. I, therefore, *did* engage to assist  
“ Captain Millemont’s design of carrying  
“ her off.”

“ Of

“Of carrying her off!”—was in the same instant echoed by four voices.

“Why yes,” replied the lady; “for I am convinced she never will go by her own consent, while Mr. Seymour’s attachment to her continues.”

Mrs. Mitchel, in this conference had spoken the truth, but not all the truth, as she omitted the trifling circumstance of her having received the promise of a very large reward if, through her assistance, the Captain should succeed in his vile project. She at first intended to conceal, likewise, the supposition of the gentleman’s not being over fond of matrimony, not imagining that the family could be so infamously bad as to consent that so near a relation should be plunged into such inevitable destruction.

The treaty thus began, was soon finished, and a plan formerly agreed upon, laid aside. By Mrs. Mitchel’s advice, Harriet was to be forbid appearing till Seymour was gone from Beverly, that the lovers might not

concert the means of carrying on a correspondence.

This arrangement took place after the return of the party from the ball; and in the morning, Miss Montague, according to the given prohibition, continued in her own apartment.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

### *A worse than Catiline Conspiracy.*

WE are now seated in the breakfast room at Beverly-Lodge, where all the family, Miss Montague excepted, are assembled.

“Where,” asked Mr. Percival, as the first cup went round, “is Harriet?”

“In her own room, I believe,” replied his mother, with a scornful toss of her head to one side.

“Does

“Does she not come to breakfast?” asked he.

“No; she pretends to be unwell; but I fancy she does not ail much,” returned the female veteran.

At this Henry Seymour looked amazed; his tea-cup, which was just at his lips, was returned to its faucer, and his breath suspended. He seemed afraid to lose a syllable of what was passing.

“If,” said Mr. Percival, “the girl be really ill—”

“Pho,” interrupted his lady; “you heard what my mother said. Depend upon it, she is only apprehensive of a public reprimand for her last night’s shameful conduct.”

“WHAT!” exclaimed Henry Seymour, not knowing what he said, and scarce conscious that he spoke at all.

“You may well be surprised Sir,” said Mrs. R. Percival, with a triumph she could not conceal; “you may well wonder at what I have said, respecting the modest Miss

“Montague: but it will soon be known my  
“opinion was a more just one than that of  
“those who thought so highly of her.”

Mr. Barker and George Percival looked in amaze: the latter, a lively sensible youth had tears in his eyes, and warmly said, “what can my mother mean!”

“Mean!” repeated Miss Percival. “Why  
“what she says, to be sure!”

“Impossible!” said Mr. Barker.

“Very true for all that,” replied the pert Miss Deborah—every one seeming desirous to assist in injuring the lovely sufferer. Indeed, except George who was strongly attached to Mr. Barker, Mr. Seymour and his cousin Harry, as he used to term Miss Montague, they had all been instructed how to behave on the occasion, though not made acquainted with the secret of the transaction. The precious groupe were, by education (we will not say by nature) framed for mischief, and greatly enjoyed the present scene.

“Pray,” asked the slow and subtle Robert,

bert, as the subject seemed subsiding,  
“what does cousin Harriet say for herself?”

“Say!” echoed old Mrs. Percival.  
“What can she say!”

“There surely must be some mistake”  
—kindly rejoined Mr. Barker.

“Too surely none,” replied Mrs. Mitchell: first looking with an earnest expression of sorrow at the gentleman who spoke last; then casting her eyes downward, as if they were half shut, and heaving a sigh; the rest of the knowing party shaking their heads in silence at each other, with signs of deep concern.

“Gracious Heaven!” exclaimed Henry Seymour; unable to conceal his emotion.  
“What can all this mean!”

“Come, come,” said Stephen Percival,  
“things may not be so bad as you imagine.”  
“My cousin Montague has good sense,  
“though her natural vivacity may have led  
“her a step too far. To be sure Millemont  
“has a most atrocious character, and he is  
“very artful; which latter quality is some  
“excuse for my cousin.”

“*Millemont!*”

“*Millemont!*” said Henry Seymour. “What of him, Mr. Stephen?” He spoke with a haughty air.

Mr. Percival, without giving his son leisure to reply to Seymour’s interrogation, said, with sternness—“Millemont’s art *may* be some excuse for Harriet’s indiscretion; and you must allow young Sir,” nodding his head, “that it is, likewise, a reason for the exertion of your mother, and grandmother’s, strictest precaution. She is under their guardianship, and they are, in some measure, accountable to the world for her conduct.”

“As for *your* question Sir,” turning to Seymour with cold severity—“it is not necessary it should be answered; as it relates to a business in which you are not any way concerned.”

“I *am* concerned Sir,” firmly replied the youth; “and so must every one be who knows Miss Montague, in all in which she is interested.”

Mr. Percival looked surprised at Seymour’s intrepid maner, but not chusing to take



take any particular notice of it, tauntingly replied—"Your opinion Harry, if it continues, may soon be a singular one. The  
"indiscreet conduct of a girl without fortune, and, in case of indiscretion, without  
"friends, will not, I should imagine, be  
"considered as a matter of much moment.  
"Had she acted as *my* niece, the world  
"would have esteemed her as such."

A tumult of various passions agitated the breast of Seymour. Amazement and perplexity checked his resentment, or he would have answered his guardian with indignation. For a few moments he continued fixed and silent, without a consciousness of being surrounded by observers; but suddenly recollecting himself, he bowed to the company, and retired without speaking, hastily walking into the garden, where, throwing himself upon a seat, he was lost in a labyrinth of perplexing and distressing ideas.

As soon as Seymour left the breakfast room, Mr. Percival requested Mr. Barker to  
look

look over an account he had received from a tradesman in London ; begging him to be expeditious, as he must reply to it by that morning's post, but this was only a piece of finessè to prevent that gentleman's asking any questions about the circumstances of the preceding evening. The young ladies then retired, and George was ordered to leave the room ; after which some ensuing particulars were the subjects of conversation between the party remaining ; but we will return to Miss Montague, whom we left in a situation which truly merits compassion.

In obedience to Mrs. Percival's injunction, she remained a close prisoner in her chamber, where melancholy images pressed continually upon her spirits. She could not conjecture the occasion of the order which she had received, but as she supposed that it would only be a temporary one, it did not distress her on any other account than that of its preventing her explaining to Seymour the cause of her  
having

having danced with Captain Millemont. Had she known the conversation which passed in the breakfast room, it would have rendered her situation intolerable, as it would have filled her mind with the most tormenting ideas, respecting the sentiments which it must have raised in that of her Henry.

About two days before these disagreeable events, she had received a letter from Lucy Spencer, dated Durham (having before heard from her several times since the party left Beverly) to tell her her mother found her health so much improved by the means which had been used to amend it, that she could not be persuaded it was necessary to pursue their intended route, and as she wished to be at home, it was agreed that her father and uncle Abington should visit the estate in Scotland, and that the rest of the peregrinators should return to Beverly in twelve days or a fortnight.

Harriet now endeavored to turn her thoughts to the subjects of Miss Spencer's letter,

letter, and to answer it; not suspecting, as she had hitherto been allowed to write without molestation, that her future letters would be intercepted. Earnest to inform her friend of all her concerns, she began with the incidents which most affected her, and was deeply engaged in her employ, when a room-maid hastily opened the door of her chamber, and advancing with a paper in her hand said—"Here Miss Harriet! look what I have got. Let me have an answer in half an hour." She then ran out of the room, and left the alarmed fair one to peruse the billet, which was from Mr. Scymour, and contained the following lines.

"For Heaven's sake, my Harriet, relieve the tortures which at this period, tear my soul. Not for the Indies, would I live over again the last twelve hours.

"The bearer undertakes to bring me an answer.

"Tell me why you seclude yourself.

"Tell

“ Tell me why you, last night changed  
“ your determination respecting dancing.”

“ I have not time for more, or I would  
“ be less abrupt.

“ In greater perplexity and with a  
“ greater ardency of affection than I can  
“ express,

“ Your’s,

“ HENRY SEYMOUR.”

The perusal of this scrip, gave a pang to the breast of Miss Montague. She fancied that she observed a coolness in the lines, occasioned, as she conjectured, by the incident of the evening before. However she was pleased with the idea of being able to clear to his satisfaction, that circumstance, and immediately wrote the following.

“ The great anxiety which is evident in  
“ your note, surprises and alarms me, as  
“ it appears to be raised more than the  
“ occasion warrants. Yet upon recollec-  
“ tion, you could not but be astonished at  
“ seeing

“ seeing me led in the dance by Captain  
“ Millemont, as it would be impossible  
“ you could conjecture my having been  
“ commanded by my grandmother, with  
“ a countenance and accent more than  
“ usually severe, to accept his hand for the  
“ evening, to which I think I need not  
“ say I found myself extremely averse ;  
“ not more on account of my declaration  
“ to you, than from disinclination. My  
“ grandmother’s motive for her very extra-  
“ ordinary proceeding, still remains to be  
“ fathomed. It’s explication is beyond my  
“ powers of divination.

“ You ask me why I seclude myself.

“ It was the first question, but some-  
“ thing tells me it is not, to you, the most  
“ material one.

“ Ah Seymour ! how soothing is the  
“ flattery which persuades us to believe in  
“ the solicitude of those whose good opi-  
“ nion we value ! But in my present situa-  
“ tion, which depresses my spirits and  
“ softens me to every one who treats me  
“ with

“ with kindness, it is dangerous to trust  
“ my pen to stray on such a subject.

“ Yet, *dangerous*, did I say ! Pardon me  
“ my friend : I will not do you so much  
“ injustice as to persist in that sentiment.

“ We have known each other from child-  
“ hood, and have, I trust, instinctively im-  
“ bibed a mutual reliance ; such a reliance  
“ as, on my part, permits me—urges me  
“ to say, that your favorable sentiments,  
“ with those of my Lucy, form one great  
“ basis of my felicity.

“ With regard to my seclusion, as you  
“ term it—I keep in my apartment by my  
“ grandmother’s order ; the reason for  
“ which is as inexplicable as her order of  
“ last night.

“ I must hasten to fold my letter, lest  
“ Betty call for it before it be ready ;  
“ otherwise I could, with pleasure, indulge  
“ myself in seeing my sentiments, on some  
“ other particulars, upon paper.

“ HARRIET MONTAGUE.”

After

After which she unfortunately subjoined the following postscript.

“ When opportunity offers, I mean to  
“ hint to you some new conjectures, and  
“ to ask your advice how to proceed, but  
“ till I see you, will suppress my surmises,  
“ as the subject is too copious for my pre-  
“ sent leisure.”

When Miss Montague had finished her letter, she anxiously waited for the servant's appearance, but that being delayed beyond her expectation, sat down and took a copy of what she had written, for her Lucy's perusal; as so fervent was the friendship between these two young ladies, and so unbounded the confidence, that neither was satisfied except the other knew and approved even the minutia of her proceedings.

Betty now called for her commission, which she promised to execute with faithfulness, and perhaps, when it was made, intended faithfully to perform her engagement, but at the bottom of the stairs she was met by Mr. Stephen Percival, who  
having



having diligently watched the motions of Mr. Seymour, had seen him talking to this girl, and observed that he put something into her hand which she received with a courtesy. Suspecting the business, he followed the servant into the house, but could not overtake her before she reached Miss Montague's apartment : he therefore waited her return and purchased her secret for a smaller sum than that which was promised her by Seymour, as a compliance with his injunctions did not prohibit her receiving that likewise. No sooner was Betty in possession of Harriet's letter, than she obeyed the orders of Stephen Percival by hastening to put it into his hands. He instantly carried it to his mother, who calling a consultation and reading aloud the contents, proposed to take off the postscript, which, conveniently for her purpose, was written on the back side of the direction, and send it to Seymour as a note. This met the approbation of the council, and was accordingly executed.

Seymour

Seymour received the note with avidity; gave the promised gratuity, and to avoid observation, hastened into the garden before he broke the seal. What were his emotions when he perused the contents of the scrip! He paused: he conjectured, but was unable to draw any conclusion, which the reader will not wonder at when he turns back and takes a review of the lines presented to him by his corrupted messenger. Unwilling to accuse, or even to suspect his beloved fair, he endeavored to believe the most improbable suggestions, which, however, sunk upon examination, and as he was convinced that she must have had sufficient time and privacy to have given him a more satisfactory answer, he could not but attribute her laconic reply to a disinclination to explicitness; an idea which grieved him beyond the comprehension of those *happy* mortals whose breasts are steeled by native apathy, or rendered insensible to the painful and pleasing sensations of tenderness,

derness, by a continual whirl of fashionable amusements.

Seymour, who had a great deal of that warmth of temper which is usually attendant upon a generous mind, found a degree of resentment mixed with his wonder and affliction; and was almost ready to express some displeasure in the letter he intended to write in the evening, as Betty had told him she should then have an opportunity of conveying it, without suspicion: but a moment's reflection banished his design, by presenting his Harriet as she really was—just; generous; artless, and affectionate: he therefore gave a picture of his tenderness and distress, without one shade of reproach for the uncertainty and anxiety in which her note had involved him; requesting if she was straitened in time that she would only ease his apprehensions by telling him, in six words, she was well and not unhappy. The language in which he wrote, was that of the most pure, ardent and respectful affection; and would, had

it reached the lovely one addressed, have heightened, if possible, her sentiments in his favor; but the treacherous Betty obeyed her corrupters by delivering it to Mrs. Mitchel, who ordered the girl to tell Seymour that Miss Harriet begged him not to write any more at present; it being impossible for her to give him an answer, as she had neither pen; ink nor paper.

Betty, in the morning, delivered the fabricated message to Mr. Seymour, who instantly endeavored to obviate the difficulty of his Harriet's writing, by requesting the servant to convey to her the necessary implements; but the well-instructed hireling told him, with a simpering countenance, that she believed he did not need to give himself that trouble, as when she opened the door she saw Miss Harriet directing a letter, which, at her entrance, she hastily covered with a handkerchief, and *looked dashed*.

Upon this information, the mind of Seymour was in a tumult. Impatience sparkled

sparkled in his eyes, and the unconnected monosyllables of How? When? To whom? escaped his lips, almost without his consciousness. He then stood suspended while the girl told him she did not know who the letter was for, only as Mrs. Lumley's servant was talking to the little postilion she heard him ask what time the answer would be ready, which put a thought in her mind that somehow it was about that letter.

Agitated as Seymour was at this intimation, he had sufficient recollection to prevent any farther appearance of embarrassment, therefore desiring Betty to be ready to attend fresh commands in the evening, he retired to write in a style expressive of his distracted state of mind. Had Miss Montague read the contents of this last epistle, without being informed of the deception which had been practised upon him, she would have apprehended his having been disordered in his intellects ; so various

were his passions that, with rapidity, succeeded each other.

Having finished writing, he shut himself up in his chamber, where he spent the rest of the day in such a state of uneasiness as our experienced readers will truly commiserate. The summons to dinner he refused to obey, but being, by a particular message, desired to attend the tea-table, he went into the drawing-room, where, soon after his entrance, a letter was read from a gentleman at the college to which the youths were going, giving information that the rooms they were to occupy were become vacant sooner than was expected, and that they were, therefore, invited to go when their convenience permitted.

A consultation now took place, and it was agreed they should set off on the day after the morrow; every thing having been previously arranged, and, as Mr. Percival observed, their departure having been already too long deferred. Mr. Seymour endeavored to raise some objection to such a sudden

sudden determination ; but not being able to give any sufficient reason for delay, he was over-ruled and obliged to submit.

The plan thus regulated, Seymour left the drawing-room, and, in the hall, met Betty, who begged, in a seeming hurry, to have the letter immediately, as she had then an opportunity of delivering it. He therefore stole into the steward's room, and on the outside informed Harriet that in two days he was compelled to leave Beverly ; and entreated her, by every sacred tie, to give immediate relief to his almost insupportable distress.

Betty was no sooner in possession of the letter, than, as usual, she hastened with it to Mrs. Mitchel, who in about an hour after, ordered her to give it to Mr. Seymour, with Miss Montague's compliments, and a declaration that it was not in her power either to write or receive any letters from any body.

The girl executed her commission, and

instantly hurried away without waiting a reply, had Mr. Seymour been disposed to have given any, but he stood silent and still; almost doubting the evidence of that sense which informed him of the return of his letter with an unbroken seal.

We will not endeavor to paint the sensation of Mr. Seymour upon this occasion, as experience, and experience only, can give the idea of his tortures, which were indeed acute. In a moment of frenzy he determined to rush into her apartment, let what would be the consequence, and demand an explanation of the seeming inexplicable circumstances by which he was surrounded, and impetuously darted forward to effect his purpose, but he found the usual approach to the back stair-case barricaded, and was told by Betty, to whom he applied, that every body now went up to Miss Harriet's room through Miss Percival's, where the ladies were then sitting at work.

This



This intelligence increased Seymour's amazement, and he asked various questions of the tutored hireling, who told him Mrs. R. Percival said if Miss would not go down to them, she should not have her own way, nor should any one go to her without her knowledge ; adding that old madam said she was afraid of her attempting to run away with somebody.

Seymour's rage now entirely subsided ; he sunk into despondency, and without speaking another word, walked slowly away. When retired, he endeavored to investigate the circumstances with as much calmness as he could collect ; but all seemed confusion ; he would not accuse, yet how could he acquit, his beloved Harriet. After resolving upon first one, then another, mode of proceeding, he finally fixed upon giving a minute detail of the whole to Miss Spencer, upon her return, requesting her friendly offices, and entreating her to write to him at Cambridge, in the first moment

of her being able to gain any intelligence respecting her friend. His letter upon this occasion, could we stop to present it to our readers, would not fail to affect every heart fraught with sensibility.

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## CHAP. XLVII.

### *The Second Chapter of the Conspiracy.*

**T**HE day preceding that in which our students are to leave Beverly is arrived, and all the family, but Miss Montague, again seated at the breakfast table.

“What” said Mrs. R. Percival, as Henry Seymour (whom she heard in the passage) entered the room, “can occasion this obstinate sullenness?”

“I cannot conjecture,” replied the old lady, seemingly unmindful of the youth’s appearance; “for I never before saw any  
“ traits

“ traits of that temper in her ; yet when I  
“ urged her to accompany me down, she  
“ sat determinedly still, without speaking  
“ and without motion.”

“ You told her madam,” said Mrs. R.  
Percival, “ that her cousins and Mr.  
“ Seymour were to set off with Mr. Barker  
“ to-morrow, I suppose.”

“ To be sure I did, and advanced every  
“ argument I could think of, joined with  
“ some threatenings, to bring her with  
“ me ; but without effect. I then went  
“ into my closet,” continued the veteran  
Hecate, “ where through a crevice in the  
“ partition I could observe all her actions,  
“ and perceived she was weeping over a  
“ letter.”

“ By Heavens !” exclaimed Seymour to  
himself, “ that letter was mine.”

“ It was impossible you could see any-  
“ thing that was written in it——” said  
Mrs. Mitchel.

“ Certainly I could not,” returned the

other. " I could only discover that it had  
" been secured with a broad black seal."

" Ah!" said Mrs. Mitchel to Mrs. R. Percival, " your conjecture is too assuredly  
" a just one. Yet how is it possible the  
" intercourse can be carried on! I fear  
" some of the servants have been deeply  
" bribed, as nothing can procure a con-  
" fession from any of them."

Henry Seymour was again thunder-  
struck. The mention of the black seal was  
the bolt which smote him. Captain Mil-  
lemont was in elegant second mourning.  
Captain Millemont, therefore, was instantly  
in his view, and the tumult in his mind  
was again rising very fast, when Mr. Bar-  
ker addressed Mrs. Percival with much se-  
riousness in his manner and countenance.

" Allow me madam to make a particu-  
" lar request. Perfectly, I think, acquaint-  
" ed with Miss Montague's disposition, I  
" am convinced, whatever new sentiments  
" it is *possible* she ~~may~~ have imbibed, she is  
" not

“not invulnerable. You will therefore  
“greatly relieve my concern, and highly  
“oblige me by introducing me to her  
“presence, that I may exert the influence  
“she has hitherto allowed me to have with  
“her, in an endeavor to find what is the  
“occasion of her acting so unlike herself.”  
“That request, Mr. Barker,” haughtily  
returned Mrs. Percival, “is very much un-  
“like *your*-self, and positively shall not be  
“complied with: for if she so obstinately re-  
“fuses to confide in her female friends and  
“near relations, she shall not be humored  
“with an opportunity of making her con-  
“fession to one so declaredly disposed to  
“absolve her crimes; and I think (you  
“must excuse me sir) your proposal dis-  
“plays some degree of impropriety.”

A serious altercation now arose in the room, which ended with Mrs. Percival's declaring that no one should have access to her grand-daughter till she returned to a sense of her duty and complied with her hourly commands to appear below stairs,

and that she would not much longer allow anything to be carried to her either to eat or to drink, as she was convinced her indisposition was all assumed.

Dissatisfactory and improbable as were Mrs. Percival's assertions, there was no appealing from her sentence, the effect of which was, that Henry Seymour set off for Cambridge without a possible opportunity of either seeing or writing to Miss Montague : but he left at the post-office, as he passed through the village, his letter of intelligence and supplication, to Miss Spencer.

## CHAP. XLVIII.

*Harriet's Release more bitter than her  
Confinement.*

OUR readers will not now be sorry to return to Miss Montague, who passed the period of her confinement in the utmost affliction. She doubted not but the commands of Mrs. Percival respected the attachment between her and her Henry ; little suspecting the abominable plot which was formed against her ; or supposing that so short a space of time would remove Seymour from Beverly. Just before the ball, which laid the foundation of her ensuing troubles, she had received a letter from Miss Spencer ; to whom she now employed the solitary hours in writing an account of her situation, not apprehending the loss of that pleasure which she had hitherto unmolested

molested enjoyed, of a free correspondence with the friend of her heart: but this liberty was no longer to be allowed, for giving her letter to Betty, who had orders to attend her, it was carried to the Congress which had devoted her to destruction. At first, Mrs. Mitchel and Miss Percival excepted, they all found some little reluctance of throwing her into such certain ruin, but by familiarizing themselves to the subject, it insensibly lost its terrific powers, and seemed, at length, to be nothing but a proper measure for securing the grandeur and consequently, in their opinion, the happiness of their own family. Mrs. Mitchel's polar star was pecuniary interest; whilst neglected advances and jealousy, were the *ignis fatuus* of Miss Percival.

The fourth day of Harriet's confinement, was the day fixed for the departure of Mr. Barker and his pupils. The reverend gentleman accompanied his young friends to college, where he saw them properly introduced,



duced, and then set off for Scarborough, having some family business to transact in that place. He was afterwards, at Mr. Seymour's request and expence, to return to Cambridge, where he was to reside in lodgings during the stay of the young gentlemen at the University. Seymour who was always very fond of his tutor, and requited his paternal with filial affection; proposed this plan, and Mr. Percival, thinking it might be a serviceable one to his sons, readily acceded to it.

The gentlemen left Beverly early in the morning, after which, the family was summoned to breakfast, and Miss Montague desired to attend below stairs. With surprise and gladness she obeyed the order; her heart beating high at the idea of seeing her Henry after this strange absence, and not entertaining the least suspicion of his departure, which had been precipitated by the management of Mr. Percival, before the period originally assigned for it.

When

When Harriet entered the room, she was surprised to see the breakfast table so thinly attended, but not chusing to appear to notice the circumstance, she advanced silently to her seat. Every one, for some time, seemed to avoid conversation, till at length Miss Percival, eager to triumph over Miss Montague's disappointment, observed that it was a charming morning for the travellers, and quite calculated to keep up Mr. Seymour's good humor and high spirits.

Harriet looked at her cousin with attention, and blushed.

"I should like to see Robert when he first enters Cambridge," said Miss Deborah, "I dare say he will be surprised to find it so large a place."

"Cambridge!" said Miss Montague, and stopped.

"Yes my dear," replied old Mrs. Percival, with a kindness entirely new; "your cousins and Mr. Seymour are this morning set off for College. You shall now  
" Harriet

“Harriet, be told the cause of your late  
“confinement; which, believe me, my  
“child, was intended to promote your fu-  
“ture welfare.”

Harriet looked amazed, and being deeply  
affected with the idea of Seymour’s depar-  
ture, she burst into tears.

“Why this,” asked Mrs. R. Percival.  
“Are you not told every thing is intended  
“for your good?”

“My cousin is sorry perhaps,” sarcasti-  
cally observed Miss Percival, “that my  
“*brothers* went without her bidding them  
“adieu.”

“Have done, Barbara,” said the grand-  
mother, in a tone of severity. “Your in-  
“teruendoes are frequently very ill-timed.  
“Leave your cousin to me. She is too  
“wise not to pursue her own happiness,  
“when she shall be told in what it con-  
“sists: by doing which, she will be placed  
“considerably above your sphere.”

Mr. Percival was not of the party. He  
went the first stage with the young gentle-  
men,

men, leaving the ladies to conduct the important business of the day ; which was to introduce Captain Millemont to Miss Montague as a lover.

Mrs. Percival the elder, desiring to be left with the afflicted beauty, undertook to prepare her to receive the insidious beau with complaisance.

The old lady began by saying that she was no stranger to the childish attachment which had been formed between Harriet and Mr. Seymour, and that, to prevent the ill consequences of any concerted correspondence during their separation, she had given the order for her confinement to her chamber till the young man had left Beverly : that her uncle Percival never would consent to their union, Mr. Seymour being intended for Barbara by his dying father, who, in case of his refusal to espouse her, had given his guardian such power over the estate as would, were it to be exercised, prevent Henry's ever being able to provide for a wife and family, with decency ; that Mr.

Percival

Percival had long been displeased with the appearance of a partiality, so opposite to his views ; but that he had reserved the expression of his disapprobation till the present period, when it might be intimated with effect.

To this tale, Harriet listened with horror. Her senses seemed chilled, and though her heart felt the keenest pangs, her countenance wore the marks of stupefaction, which gave the old woman (we cannot afford her a very obliging epithet) time to represent the great advantage which must result from a union with a man of such birth ; fortune and accomplishments as Captain Millemont ; and to finish a long harangue with a certain conclusion that nothing but perverseness, or a foolish and unavailing prepossession could prevent her immediately accepting, with gratitude, proposals greatly superior to any which she ever could reasonably have expected to receive.

With

With this observation Mrs. Percival left the lovely Harriet overwhelmed by distress. The moment she was alone she burst into a violent flood of tears, and throwing herself upon a sofa, leaned her face upon her arm and continued unmoved till the entrance of Miss Percival and Miss Deborah, when she lifted up her head and started.

“ Hey day !” said Barbara, with affected surprise, “ what have we here ! Miss Harriet—the beautiful Miss Harriet Montague in tears ! Art thou love-sick my little dear ? Art thou bemoaning the loss of thy faithful Henry, or deploring his inconstancy ? For I will assure thee child I do not know what to think of his fidelity ; the high spirits in which he left the Lodge being somewhat indicative of disloyalty to his Beverly dolly.”

“ What is the meaning of this Miss Percival ?” faintly asked Miss Montague. “ If you think me unfortunate, why do you add insult to my distress ? I am *indeed* distressed,” added she clasping together

gether her uplifted hands and pressing them to her bosom, “and should be ever grateful to any friendly hand that would assist in relieving me from this weight of wretchedness.”

“No body but yourself Miss Harriet, says the unfeeling Deborah, “would deem it any great wretchedness to have such a lover as Captain Millemont. Had he made a wiser choice, he might have met with a more grateful return.”

Much more of the unkind and sarcastic passed from the sisters to our Harriet, who, at length, unable to endure any longer, their tauntings, suddenly rose and left the room, retiring to her chamber; where, as we can neither mitigate, nor describe her present distress, we must leave her in a situation which we truly compassionate.

## CHAP. XLIX.

*The Love of Self—of Mischief—and of Money.*

CAPTAIN Millemont, as has appeared, made Mrs. Lumley the confidant of his intentions, who finding in Mrs. Mitchel a disposition fitted to her purpose did not scruple to hint, pretty broadly, that the hero would not be easily brought to put on conjugal fetters, but that there was no doubt of his consenting to the tie, as she had often heard him say that sooner than go out of this world without an heir, he would purchase one of a beggar, and take an oath of its legitimacy, because under the circumstance of his having no child, his estate would go to a cousin, whom he hated.

To the Whartons, Millemont spoke of his intended attack as a piece of gallantry only calculated for a little country *divertissement* : they, therefore, agreed to assist the



the *boutade*, and, in concert with Mrs. Mitchel, sent to propose a visit to the Lodge on the evening of the day to which we are arrived.

The Percivals, who did not chuse to have it appear that they entertained the least apprehension of Millemont's libertine principles, or of his designs on Miss Montague; received the Captain's expressions of particular respect and admiration with an acquiescing complaisance, and betrayed no symptom of suspicion. Even to Mrs. Mitchel—nay to each other, and almost to their own hearts, so atrocious was the circumstance, they spoke with some disguise; pretending, and endeavoring to believe, that after a period, the Captain would make Harriet his wife; that, therefore, they promoted her interest by insisting upon her favorable reception of his *tendresse*; that as to the rest—she must make her own terms; that her beauty and understanding, which, to assist their aplogising arguments, they were upon this occasion all very ready to

to allow, would doubtless so secure her ascendancy over him, that she might lead him to do any thing she pleased, and that upon these considerations, she was under the highest obligations to them for *paving the path to her destruction!*

Mrs. Mitchel devoted the lovely Harriet without once endeavoring to excuse the infamous intention. She was to receive an immediate gratuity upon the Captain's being put into possession of his prize, and, depending upon being absolved by the Percivals, should they even know how deeply she was concerned in the business, she requested that Miss Montague, upon her determined refusal of Millemont's offers of affection, might be committed solely to her management, a request, which was eagerly agreed to, as the relations, still more interested in the event than the governess, persuaded themselves that they should thus be entirely exonerated.

## CHAP. L.

*The greatest Treachery lurks under the Sem-  
blance of Kindness.*

WE will not trouble ourselves to relate what passed at the visit last mentioned ; or tease our reader with the arguments offered to Miss Montague in favour of her new lover. Suffice it that every opportunity which he could desire was given him for pleading his suit, and every consideration advanced in his absence, by his partizans, which tended to promote it ; but in vain. Harriet remained immoveable. Neither threats nor persuasion affected the constancy of her sentiments, or abated the appearance of that gentle modest firmness, void of any show of what is called obstinacy, which accompanied her refusals. She requested ; she entreated not to be urged to what was so opposite to her principles as

a union with Captain Millemont, whose mind was so contrary to her own. She averred that she was not biassed by any prior partiality, for that had she never heard the name of Henry Seymour, that of Millemont, with the character which was annexed to it, would have been her abhorrence.

Strong, for a time, was the contention between Miss Montague and those who styled themselves her friends : but at length Mrs. Mitchel, having settled her plans with the Captain and his honorable female friend (who deserves an appellation too coarse to be admitted into these pages) desired that menaces, and even earnest persuasion, might be suspended, as she doubted not of being successful in a short period. Depending upon her fidelity and adroitness, the Percivals complied with her injunctions; Millemont being, as usual, favorably received at the Lodge, and the family at Mr. Wharton's, Mrs. Lumley excepted, led to believe that the beau was successful in his amour.

Harriet

Harriet was all this time impatiently waiting in expectation of the return of Miss Spencer, from whom, to her infinite surprise, she had not heard since she transmitted to her an account of her late distressed situation; and had entreated her friendly offices for an explanation with Mr. Seymour. Every time the post-man brought letters to the Lodge, Miss Montague expected to see one directed to herself:—but her expectations were vain, for the bag was first delivered to Mrs. Mitchel, and rifled of all that were intended for the lovely girl. Finding by information thus dishonestly obtained that Lucy Spencer and the family would soon be at Beverly, the Governess hastened the execution of the concerted measures; but previous to the final movement, she advised Millemont to write to Miss Montague a very respectful, and supplicating letter, which she herself delivered to the young lady. Harriet, after having read it, at Mrs. Mitchel's desire, in her presence said—"Why will Mr. Millemont

“ persist in giving himself and me this un-  
“ availing trouble ?”

“ And are you, Miss Montague, *deter-*  
“ *mined* that it shall be unavailing ?” asked  
Mrs. Mitchel.

“ I am indeed,” replied Harriet ; “ and  
“ how obliged should I think myself to you,  
“ madam, if you would endeavour to free  
“ me from this persecution ! *Indeed* I am  
“ very unhappy.”

She spoke in a melancholy accent and  
shed tears ; at which the governess seemed  
to be affected, and after a pause, said—  
“ Well then write him such a negative as  
“ I approve. I will convey it and be an-  
“ swerable for its consequences.”

“ Dear madam you delight me ! I will  
“ write what you desire, provided it be ex-  
“ pressive of my unalterable determination  
“ never more to hear from Mr. Millemont  
“ upon this very irksome subject ?”

“ Will you transcribe what I shall indite  
“ Harriet ?”

“ With

“ With pleasure, madam, upon the before-mentioned condition.”

Mrs. Mitchel, without replying, sat down to the writing table, and in a few minutes putting the copy of a letter into Harriet's hand ; bade her write it, and told her that she would convey it to the Captain with all expedition. Harriet did not approve of the style of the billet, as she thought that it betrayed something of an air of mystery ; but as Mrs. Mitchel looked peremptory and would probably have been offended with any expressed objection to what had been written under such circumstances of apparent kindness, she did not hesitate to make the requisite transcription.

As the reader will see in a few pages the use which was made of the above manuscript, we will not, at present, offer it to his perusal, but proceed to other matters.

Every body at the Lodge now seemed in perfect good humour with Miss Montague, except Miss Deborah, who secretly envied her the admiration of Captain Millemont,

with whom she was, or supposed herself to be, deeply in love. The experienced soldier soon perceived his advantage over the heart of this girl, who would quickly have surrendered at discretion, had not the commandant been obliged to delay the siege in order to secure what he deemed a more valuable prize; taking, however, the several opportunities she offered him of fixing his interest in her affection; telling her he was foolishly entangled by his professions of attachment to her cousin, from which he would endeavor to disengage himself as soon as it could be done with decency.



## CHAP. LI.

*The Success of the Conspiracy.*

**T**HE event is at hand. Miss Montague stands tottering upon the brink of destruction.

Charming, lovely Harriet! Good and amiable! We deplore the severity of our task which obliges us to relate thy sad destiny; yet we congratulate thee that amidst thy deepest sufferings thou couldst look into thy mind and find consolation. In that, shone a constant light which could not be extinguished by the darkest wretchedness.

Our readers will attend us to the tea-table of Mrs. R. Percival, at which, Mrs. Mitchel asked if any one would accompany her in a walk, which she thought of taking to a cottage that stood by the side of the Park, to inquire about a young woman who

had requested a recommendation to a friend of her's at Ingatestone.

Mrs. Percival said that the evenings were short, and it would soon be dark; else she would go with all her heart. Mrs. R. Percival and Miss, promised their attendance. Miss Deborah, who had been led by a note from Captain Millemont to expect him at the Lodge, desired to be excused, as did Miss Montague on account of having a letter to finish to Miss Spencer before the man went to the post office. Mrs. Percival looked displeased and said, "I have heard Harriet distinguished for complaisance; but she has not I think shown much of that quality of late."

Harriet said she was very willing to go if her company was desired, as she could send her letter in the morning; and she rose though with reluctance to equip herself. She wished indeed to have written to her Lucy that evening; but she perceived a gathering severity in the old lady's countenance;

tenance; and at the present crisis she particularly dreaded to encounter its effects.

Mr. Percival said that he would ride to the village, and endeavor to prevail with the Bellairs and Mrs. Quaintly to return with him to supper, as it was likely to be a fine moon-light evening.

This intention was much approved, and the ladies were preparing for their walk, when old Mrs. Percival said that she had changed her mind, and would go with them to the cottage, if they would promise not to gossip so long as they did in general. The promise was given, and the party moved onward, walking pretty fast till they arrived at the end of their journey. Here the business—the ostensible business of the walk was presently transacted, yet contrary to their promise to Mrs. Percival, who did not remind them of it, the ladies continued talking to the cottagers, till Mrs. Mitchel stepped to the door; looked out and listened; and then said to Mrs. R. Percival—  
“It is time for us to go.” Upon which the

mischief-loving gentlewoman last mentioned, hastened without ceremony out of the rural abode and was followed by her companions, who walked slowly on without speaking till they reached a gate which opened into the park. Here they were surrounded by several men who advancing to Miss Percival seized, and carried her off amidst the cries and screams of her friends, to their commander, who stood by the door of a chaise and four that waited at a turning of the road. When the Captain—to which title the most unskilled reader will add the name of Millemont—saw the mistake of his ruffians, he cursed them for the blunder, and darting forward, clasped Miss Montague (who was running to assist her struggling cousin) in his arms, and conveyed her into the chaise; which, as soon as he was seated in it with his prize, was driven off with all possible speed; the servants following, and the ladies remaining silent spectators of the action.

As the distress of our Harriet can more easily be imagined than described, we must leave it to our readers to represent to themselves what she endured when she found herself thus treacherously precipitated into the power of such a man as Captain Millemont—a man whose principles she knew to be infamous, and to whom she had conceived an insuperable aversion. Not one gleam of hope from any expectation of pursuit, presented itself. She had seen and heard sufficient to convince her that her relations and Mrs. Mitchel had assisted the horrid plot, as the moment Miss Percival, who, in her surprise, called out—“ You are  
“ mistaken ! You are mistaken ! I am not  
“ the right !”—was released, the ladies ceased to resist the outrage, and when she struggled, and looked to them for assistance, she saw them walking into the park without any appearance of concern.

The carriage was now drawn with velocity along the London road, and Miss Montague saw herself abandoned by every

human creature but by those who had determined upon her destruction : yet the piety of her soul, which, young as she was, was pure and fervent, bade her hope for some interposition in her favor from that Being to whom she looked, and of whom she implored protection. Dreadfully gloomy as was the immediate prospect, she essayed to look beyond it, and endeavored to explore future brightness ; but when Millemont, in extenuation of what he had done, pleaded his passion—when *he* bade her be consoled in the view of approaching felicity, her heart sickened at the prospect ; the image of Seymour presented itself, and she was almost frantic with grief and terror.

A particular class of the young ladies of the present age, a couple of whom we have now in our view, will put up their lips in scoff at the wretchedness of our beloved Harriet Montague, and wonder that her situation should be considered as distressing.

“ What would the girl have wished for ? ” asks Miss the first, who never knew a soft  
and

and at the same time, pure sensation (her affection, as she calls it, being rendered muddy by a variety of passions). “What  
“ could she desire more than the adoration  
“ of a man of such a figure—a man of fortune, and a man of fashion!”—incidental advantages, which in her estimation greatly overbalance immorality, irreligion and every vice by which a human creature can be degraded.

“What indeed!”—replies Miss the second, who is the wittiest of the two;  
“but perhaps she had the gothic sentiments of Mrs. Ratford and Miss Howard; who assert that rectitude of mind and  
“regularity of conduct are to be preferred  
“to a man of spirit with fashionable manners.”—At this the friends burst forth into such a laugh as would have resounded from the pipe of Gulliver’s Glumdalclitch, had she expressed her mirth by her organs of vociferation. But now, reader, we must bid adieu to our distressed favourite; resigning her to the protection of that Providence

vidence which (notwithstanding the sarcasms we shall draw upon ourselves, for the assertion, from the Misses lately mentioned) we are convinced will, sooner or later, vindicate and reward the sufferer who looks up to Heaven for protection.



## CHAP. LII.

*Miss Montague completely disgraced.*

AS soon as the chaise and its attendants were out of sight, Mrs. Percival ; her daughter-in-law ; grand-daughter and the governess, thought proper to resume their screamings.

“ Help ! help ! murder ! help ! ”—was heard from one and all as they ran towards the Lodge, while the people from the cottage, alarmed by their first outcry, were hastening to their assistance. The mistake made by Millemont’s Pandarus, was to them:



them a lucky circumstance, as the early alarm gave some color of truth to what they affirmed when they said, that as soon as they were in sight of the chaise Miss Montague sprang forward to Captain Millemont, saying—"Hasten, hasten away, or I shall be taken from you." That they immediately called for help as loud as possible, but were too distant from a house to receive any in time; that as the carriage was going off, Harriet, who had been lifted in by the Captain, said—"Excuse me, my dear friends, that I pursue my happiness and good fortune."

Some servants of Mr. Percival's soon came up, and presently after, Mr. Percival himself, who was just then returned from the village, whence he was accompanied by the friends whom he had invited to supper. To them the same tale, with proper lamentations from the ladies, was circumstantially related, and by the visitors it was implicitly believed.

Thus

Thus not only the happiness, but the reputation of one of the best and most amiable—one of the most beautiful and accomplished young women in existence, was at once blasted by the vile machinations of envy and avarice.

Mr. and Mrs. Bellair and Miss Biddy, seemed quite astonished that a young lady so celebrated for a fine understanding and so noted for a sweet disposition, should take such a rash, such an imprudent step; yet they confessed that they had heard (what, indeed, was industriously propagated) that Miss Montague had shewn an unexpected predilection for Captain Millemont, ever since his first appearance in Beverly, which was the more wondered at on account of her supposed prior attachment to Mr. Seymour.

Mrs. Quaintly said she was always convinced Miss Harriet was not amongst the chosen ones, though she would not shock the ears of her poor grandinama, who had so great a fondness for her, with mentioning

ing her knowledge of her reprobation ; but that now she thought it right to speak of it, that her friends might take comfort in knowing that no management of their's could have prevented her destruction, which was sealed while she was yet in her cradle.

Much more to this purpose did Mrs. Quaintly say relative to the unhappy Harriet, but we have too much respect for every religion—even for that which Mrs. Quaintly professed—to make individuals, on that account, subjects of ridicule ; though we cannot forbear to express our abhorrence of the belief that the Almighty GOD, whose mercy shines in every part of creation should bring into existence a set of beings who must necessarily be wicked ; a tenet, which, if experience did not evince the contrary, we should think, could never gain reception from any rational creature.

The story of Miss Montague's elopement was soon carried round the neighbourhood and was universally believed (so strong were the given proofs) by all but the Whartons.

They

They concluded that she had been carried off by their visiter, without her consent; but none, not even Mrs. Lumley, knew that the Percivals were assisant on the occasion, as Mrs. Mitchel had carefully concealed that circumstance to heighten her merit in the transaction, and consequently to enhance her reward.

Great and sincere lamentation was made in the village for the fall of Miss Montague; her friends hardly crediting, and yet impelled by the strength of evidence to believe, the deplorable event. When the account reached the Aviary and was confirmed by Mr. Percival himself, the good Mr. Spencer experienced more grief than he had known for several years, so affectionately was he attached to the lovely girl, whom he used to term the child of his heart. Mr. and Mrs. Abington shared, yet without lessening, the venerable man's concern. They seemed to doubt what they could not but believe, and endeavored to explore a mystery where none appeared.

Within

Within a short time after the sad event, the travelling friends returned to Beverly, which caused a renewal of sorrow for the loss of Miss Montague. Every one was afraid to mention the circumstance, on Lucy's account, but they soon found that she had already been alarmed.

"Have you Sir,"—asked she of Mr. Spencer soon after the first salutations were over—"lately seen, or heard from any body at the Lodge?"

"Mr. Percival breakfasted with us a few days since"—was all the good man's reply.

Questions were now multiplied, and the particulars which shall be given a few lines hence, related to the inquirers; but first we must desire our readers to take the trouble of turning to the forty-seventh chapter of this work, where they will see that Mrs. Mitchel wrote a letter for Harriet to transcribe, as if in answer to one which she had received from Captain Millemont. This letter she sent to Miss Spencer in return

turn to an intercepted one from that young lady to Miss Montague, in which Miss Spencer told her friend that she had heard a most alarming account of her situation from Mr. Seymour, and conjured her to ease the anxiety she was under, by immediately unfolding the seeming mystery.

The letter which Mrs. Mitchel artfully obtained from Harriet was as follows.

“ Your’s is this instant received. I must  
“ answer it very concisely by requesting I  
“ never more may hear from you upon its  
“ subject, which is irksome and unpleasant  
“ in the highest degree imaginable. I must  
“ —I do confess I am greatly distressed.  
“ Let not, therefore, my distress be in-  
“ creased by you. The affections of the  
“ heart are not always in our own power.  
“ We cannot guide our inclinations as we  
“ wish ; much less can our friends direct  
“ them for us. Once more, press me not  
“ on a subject which I *never* can answer to  
“ your wishes. It is not probable we shall  
“ live long in the same village, nor is it  
“ certain

“ certain we shall ever meet again. My  
“ spirits are oppressed. You have op-  
“ pressed them ; yet your motive was an  
“ intended kindness, and for that my ac-  
“ knowledgments are surely due. There  
“ is a cause on which I cannot be explicit ;  
“ but I am touching on a too affecting sub-  
“ ject, excuse therefore my abruptly con-  
“ cluding with the initials of

“ H. M.”

It has been observed that the lovely transcriber was not satisfied with the style of the above, but that she was necessitated to obey implicitly the injunctions of Mrs. Mitchell, as the only condition upon which she would consent to extricate her out of her difficulties.

We will not endeavor to paint the distress of Lucy Spencer upon the receipt of the letter. She immediately wrote again to her friend, and notwithstanding her prohibition, conjured her by the warmth and sincerity of their mutual attachment to remove her anxiety as soon as possible, by  
giving

giving a succinct account of all that had occurred, respecting her own affairs, since their separation, that she might see her with the unmixed pleasure which she had anticipated.

To this letter, Miss Spencer never received any answer, as it never reached the hands of Miss Montague; but Mrs. R. Percival wrote to Miss Martha Abington, and gave her, in a strange mysterious manner, an intimation that Harriet had fallen from her great height of reputation into an abyss of disgrace; that the family had been very sedulous to preserve her from the ruin into which she had plunged herself, by representing to her the danger in which she stood, and by taking every possible precaution to prevent her from pursuing the dictates of her imprudent attachment.

This account, which Miss Martha very unguardedly, we fear very maliciously, read to the whole party, had so strong an effect upon Miss Spencer that her mother, who was herself much concerned, feared it might injure



injure her health, and therefore proposed that the design of stopping a few days at Ipswich should be laid aside, and that they should immediately return to Beverly, to which they all assented, and Lucy was very early in her inquiries respecting her beloved friend.

It had been previously resolved upon by Mr. Spencer and Mr. and Mrs. Abington, who knew the sincere attachment which subsisted between the two young ladies, not to enter upon the affair abruptly; but Miss Spencer's solicitude rendering the precaution of no effect, they mentioned, as Mr. Percival's account of the transaction, that Miss Montague showed an evident partiality for Captain Millemont from the instant of his being introduced at the Lodge, but that she did not behave reprehensively till the ball given by Mr. Wharton, where, having declined dancing with Mr. Seymour, she gave her hand, contrary to the advice of Mrs. Mitchel, to her new admirer; that after this transaction Harriet

riet refused to leave her apartment till the departure of the young gentlemen from Beverly, not, as it was supposed, having sufficient courage to appear before Mr. Seymour, with whom it was believed she had entered into some engagement; that when the young men were gone, the ladies at the Lodge thought it necessary to keep her under some little restraint, as it was known that she had received letters from Millemont; that one evening she complained of a violent head ach, which she said was for want of air and exercise, and therefore begged to be permitted to take a walk in the park, a request with which her friend (willing to indulge her in all that with safety they could) complied; that they proposed to accompany her, but that she at first objected to this proposal though at length she thought proper to accede to it, and walked to Betson's Cottage with her grandmother, aunt, cousin and Mrs. Mitchel; that upon their return they were surpris'd by the appearance of a chaise with  
a number

a number of armed attendants, and that Harriet conducted herself in the manner which the reader may recollect the ladies related to their visitants upon their return to the Lodge; adding, as was added before, that all pursuit would have been foolish and ineffectual, as, could they have known which of the three roads the lovers took at the cross ways, and have even overtaken them, it was not probable that they would have succeeded in any attempt to rescue the deluded girl, as Millemont's attendants were more in number than they could have mustered at so short a notice; three of their servants being gone to a neighbouring fair with some young cattle; and that if by any means they *could* have seized and carried her back—her reputation was lost beyond retrieve and she could, in all likelihood, have attempted more secretly and effectually a second escape.

Plausible as was this tale and corroborated by the evidence of the cottagers, servants and the event, how could it fail of

gaining credit from the hearers! Even Lucy Spencer, though her heart was involuntarily biaſſed to her friend, was obliged to yield aſſent to her culpability, but the circumſtance preyed ſo deeply upon her ſpirits that ſhe was long a ſtranger to a gladſome idea. Miſs Montague was the beſt part of herſelf. What would have been pleaſure was grief, becauſe ſhe could not impart it to her Harriet. What was vexatious, was doubly ſo, becauſe Harriet did not, as before, leſſen by ſharing the trouble. She ſeemed to want to alleviate even her preſent diſtreſs by imparting it to its occaſioner.

Reader! art thou—or haſt thou ever been **A FRIEND!** If thy heart answereth in the affirmative, thou wilt feel what we vainly wiſh to deſcribe: thou wilt witneſs the force of the phraſe when we talk of a **KINDRED MIND**: thou wilt know the pureſt—the moſt angelic of all human ſenſations. But if thy ſoul never ſoared to this ſublime ſentiment—if thou miſtakeſt a fashionable,

or interested intercourse for the sacred alliance known only to those who are capable of real friendship, thou wilt think that we are talking of what never existed but in the ideal brains and hearts of imaginary heroes; thou mayest often repeat, but wilt never understand, that

“ Our joys when extended will always encrease.

“ And griefs, when divided, are hush'd into peace.”



## CHAP. LIII.

*A Reference to a better Work.*

**J**OHNSON has so elegantly and pathetically delineated friendship, by expressing what passed in the bosom of the Princess of Abyssinia upon the loss of her Pekouah, that except we copy his language

we cannot imitate his excellence. Instead therefore of relating the extreme grief of Lucy Spencer, we will refer our reader to the admirable work in question, where he will see this noble principle portrayed in its native colors. Witty critics will perhaps warn us of the fatal effects of this reference by telling us that it will be dangerous to give our friends a taste of such delectable entertainment, lest, in consequence of it, they lose the relish of our production, which cannot fail of being marked for insipidity upon the comparison.

Had we the presumption of considering ourselves as being nearly upon a level with the great writer in view, we might be afraid of the suggested consequence; but as we are humble enough to confess his eminent superiority over us and all our fraternity, we shall persist in the reference, and conclude by ingeniously and poetically remarking, that any symptoms of fear upon this occasion might be compared to the moon's refusing to aid  
the

the benighted traveller with her rays, from an apprehension of being reproached for not throwing around the gloom, the refulgency which can proceed only from the glorious orb of day.



## CHAPTER LIV.

*Short but not Sweet.*

THE sublimity of our ideas at the end of the last chapter, rendered it impossible for us to descend in haste to our common level, without endangering the “neck of our imagination.” We therefore choose to let ourselves down in a new chapter; and as we think this witticism has set us too low for our subject at the present crisis, we will endeavor to gain a happier medium in

## CHAP. LV.

*Hearts of different Hues.*

MISS SPENCER “was inconsolable  
“for the loss of her friend.” She  
avoided every kind of amusement, and it  
was with difficulty that she was prevailed  
upon to enter into company, being deter-  
mined to seclude herself as much as pos-  
sible. The families indeed at both the  
Aviary and the Shrubbery were deeply af-  
fected with the fall, as they could not but  
term it, of their loved Miss Montague;  
yet they endeavored to reason Lucy out of  
the violence of her grief, fearing that it  
would ultimately injure her constitution.  
Matilda and Caroline who partook of the  
great and amiable qualities that with such  
eminence distinguished the family, were so  
far from being jealous of the affection  
which their sister evinced for Miss Mon-  
tague,



tague, that they adopted the liveliness of her sorrow ; and sympathizing with her, exerted their utmost power to dispel the melancholy which had taken possession of her mind.

Mr. Spencer declared that he scarcely ever met with an event which so deeply affected him. The Abingtons, Mr. and Mrs. E. Spencer, and Mr. Russell united in deploring the loss ; Miss Martha was the only exception to the universal sorrow. Her friendship for her dear Mrs. R. Percival, or rather her abhorrence of all that was young and beautiful, made her so bitter an enemy to Miss Montague, that she gave full credit to all the malicious insinuations of the family at the Lodge, and declared her astonishment at the tears which she saw shed for the result of the coquetry and elopement of a girl so possessed with an idea of her powers of charming. She perfectly agreed with Mrs. Quaintly in having foreseen the event ; as she protested that she had always perceived

some singular marks upon her, which were not visible to common observation.

Thus did pride and conceit ; envy and ill nature, native qualities in the breast of Miss Patty Abington, endeavor to deepen the dark shade which clouded the reputation of one of the fairest and most angelic of British females ! and with many did the observations and efforts of this Lady succeed but too well ; for as the period of Stephen Percival's coming of age was rapidly advancing, the time-servers of Beverly turned, like the sun-flower, to meet the rays of the rising orb ; and strove to purchase a smile from the friends of the heir apparent by depreciating every thing with which *these* were offended. Even Mr. Spencer himself, was, by some of the abject ones, mentioned with a degree of disrespect ; but these, indeed were few, his universal—his un sullied goodness making it a daring attempt to injure the brightness of a character, acknowledged involuntarily by the most profligate and the most abandoned

abandoned to be above the reach of calumny.

When Miss Bullion heard of Harriet's elopement, she said that she did not know what else could have been expected from beauty and poverty united; that she had always pitied the girl for both these incidents, and declared that it would be a merciful act of the legislative power to command the disfiguring of all handsome beggars.

Miss Debby Percival was now in a situation which, had she been of an amiable disposition, would have merited some compassion. Millemont had effectually gained her heart, and had persuaded her that all he said to Harriet upon the subject of love, was a veil to the real tenderness with which she had inspired him. This conquest was completed in two or three interviews, and the fond girl expected every visit would produce a declaration of his flame, to her parental friends. Her disappointment, therefore, when she was told of his being gone off

with her cousin, was almost insupportable. Till this period she had so artfully guarded her behaviour, that her predilection had not been suspected by any one but Mrs. Mitchel, who being too good a politician to diffuse her ideas on that particular, had invented plausible pretexts for excluding her from any knowledge of the design against Harriet, the execution of which now overwhelmed her by a totally unexpected shock.

Millemont who was perfectly sensible of his easy and almost sudden conquest over this forward girl, had appointed an interview with her at the Lodge about the time that he expected to be put into possession of her more charming cousin, lest by any chance she should be walking in the park with the expectation of seeing him, and thereby frustrate his infamous design. When he saw Miss Montague attended by so large a party, he was alarmed with the fear of Miss Debby's being of the number, as he did not know that anybody but Mrs. Mitchel, who had engaged to decoy Harriet  
to

to the cottage before mentioned, was acquainted with the truth of the circumstances.

Upon Mrs. R. Percival's being necessarily informed of the cause of her daughter's vexation, she was considerably chagrined, as it occurred that Debby, by proper management, might have been Mrs. Millemont; a situation deemed, by her, desirable, on account of the considerable fortune of which the Captain was in possession: but then, if Harriet had not been removed, Barbara could not have hoped for Henry Seymour's hand. She endeavored, therefore to be satisfied with this balance of the account; for of the last mentioned event, not one of the family seemed to entertain the least doubt.

Mr. Russel, when he received the intelligence of his favorite's flight, seemed to suspend his belief of the particulars. He hesitated; he considered, and said there was some mystery in the affair which he would not spare any endeavors to fathom.

fathom. He communicated his suspicions to Mr. Spencer, who desired every measure might be pursued that could lead to a discovery of any treachery, but no information could be gained, except what corroborated the first intelligence. The real alarm of the conspiring ladies on the seizure of Miss Percival; their screamings which drew to the spot the cottagers; the evidence of the servants, and of the guests who were purposely invited that evening to the Lodge; the melancholy, which was now well known, of Miss Deborah——in short, every apparent circumstance so deeply criminated the suffering beauty, that a charitable opinion of her conduct seemed to be the result of determined partiality.

The Whartons were applied to for information respecting Captain Millemont.

With many expressions of regret for having introduced him at Beverly, they declared their ignorance of his destination, but gave an address to his friends, and lodgings

lodgings in London. Upon an inquiry amongst these—the universal answer was, that he was sailed for the West Indies with a young lady whom he had married the day before he went on board. In this confirmation of disgrace, therefore, we must leave our Harriet, and take a view of Mr. Seymour; but we will not begin our journey to Cambridge till the next chapter.



## CHAP. LVI.

### *The Insolence of Opulence.*

AS soon as Mr. Barker had seen his pupils properly entered at college, he set out on his Northern Expedition, and left the young men to their new instructors. Soon after his departure, Mr. Stephen Percival received a letter from his mother, with an account of Miss Montague's

tague's elopement, written, according to previous agreement, for Henry Scymour's perusal. Miss Bullion, likewise, thought proper to favor her swain with a relation of his cousin's infamy, and as the young lady expressed herself in a style somewhat original, we think it may possibly relieve the mind of our readers from the deep concern they must be under, if their sensibility be not a merely fashionable one, for our lovely fugitive.

Bullion Bower, Tuesday Eve.

“ I am out of breath Percival—I die  
“ with impatience, till I have told you the  
“ consequence of being a beautiful beg-  
“ gar. Had she had the riches, which I  
“ dare say she affects to despise, Captain  
“ Millemont would not have treated her  
“ with so much familiarity as to have pro-  
“ poed her decamping in that low way.  
“ He would have *negociated*. Prelimina-  
“ ries would have been settled, and writings  
“ signed ; after which the betrothed pair  
“ might



“ might have conversed as you and I, my  
“ future Lord Beverly (for that must be the  
“ title), now do.

“ LORD BEVERLY ! LADY BEVERLY !  
“ They are noble sounds. And you must  
“ take the name of Spencer. Bullion too,  
“ should I think be added : then, when I  
“ shall have occasion to write to you, I  
“ must address to the right honorable  
“ Stephen Percival Spencer Bullion, Vis-  
“ count Beverly. Yet I think an Earldom  
“ would be better, as you might then per-  
“ haps rise to a Marquisate ; and indeed I  
“ do not know why, *with our fortune*, you  
“ need stop even there. I am not a *pauper* ;  
“ Percival ! None of your indigent beau-  
“ ties, I can assure you. Miss BULLION  
“ may be deemed a match for first rank :  
“ yet I prefer my faithful Stephen to all the  
“ scores which have offered to negotiate :  
“ But my mother !—My mother is *hor-*  
“ *rid* vulgar. I am almost ashamed to  
“ have her visit with me. Indeed I do  
“ keep her at home as much as I can.  
“ What

“ What I am to do with her when I make  
“ my appearance, I know not. She posi-  
“ tively shall not disgrace my nuptial suit:  
“ however she is but in a bad state of  
“ health. Perhaps I shall be a mourning  
“ bride. If that is to be the case, I posi-  
“ tively will wear a silver tissue decorated  
“ with beads of jet: and I declare I wish  
“ it might happen, as the show will be  
“ quite novel: and my head shall be covered  
“ with jet and pearls, saving my blaze of  
“ brilliants and other jewels, for our pre-  
“ sentation to their Majesties.

“ I wonder when old Spencer means to  
“ evacuate the Aviary. He positively ought  
“ to go out a year before the time of our  
“ entering it, that the apartments may be  
“ fitted up in modern magnificence. I  
“ do not like those silver chandeliers in the  
“ great drawing-room. Cut glass, with  
“ gold sockets, would be more dashing.  
“ In *our* house, they might pass for real  
“ crystal; and I declare I do not know  
“ why they should *not* be so, as we can  
very

“ very well afford such things. The walls  
“ shall be covered with white satin, and  
“ burnished gold ornaments.

“ It is not thought my Lord [O how I  
“ am charmed when I anticipate that style!]  
“ that Millemont will marry your run-  
“ away relation; therefore if she returns,  
“ and, with an acknowledgment of her  
“ poverty, will sue for protection, I really  
“ think I should be tempted, by my good  
“ nature, to take her as my upper woman’s  
“ woman. I mean to have three for my-  
“ self, and they must have attendants.

“ But I must finish, for if I write all  
“ day, the charming subject would be  
“ unexhausted.

“ I am, my dear elect,

“ your unchangeable

“ REBECCA BULLION.”

The above letter, and that written by  
Mrs. R. Percival, arrived at Cambridge by  
the same post, and were put into the hands  
of Mr. Stephen as his brothers and Henry  
Seymour

Seymour were breakfasting in his room ; the young gentlemen frequently taking this first meal with each other.

When the letters were laid upon the table—" From my mother"—" From Miss Bullion," said he, taking up and opening the first, which he perused with apparent astonishment and grief.

" Is any thing the matter ?"—demanded Mr. Seymour, with quickness.

" No ; nothing ; not much. Nothing *very unexpected*"—hesitatingly returned this insidious, Blifil-hearted young man, sighing and fixing his eyes upon the fire, as if in deep and anxious cogitation, seemingly forgetful of the letter from Miss Bullion, till George said, " Had these letters been written to me brother, I think I should first have read the young lady's"

" No instance of your duty George, if you *had*"—Stephen solemnly replied, taking, at the same time the letter into his hand and deliberately breaking the seal.

" To

“ To the same tune, I find,” said he, shaking his head and rising from his seat: “ Excuse me I cannot eat any more breakfast. Robert, pour out the tea.” He then left the room, saying—“ Humanity will compassionate, when justice condemns.”



## CHAP. LVII.

*Hypocrisy particularly detestable in Youth.*

“ **W**HAT *can* be the matter!” exclaimed Seymour, immediately alarmed on Miss Montague’s account. “ What can have happened to occasion your brother’s evident perturbation?”

“ Something, I have a notion, about cousin Harriet”—replied the slow and generally silent Robert.

“ What can there be about her?”—asked George, turning hastily upon his brother,

brother, while his heart quickened its emotion.

No one made any answer. Seymour sat in fixed expectation, and Robert poured out the tea.

“ I will know said George,” concerned on Mr. Seymour’s account and on his own, “ what this means ;” and immediately went to Stephen’s chamber, where he found him reperusing the letters he had received.

“ Brother what is the matter ?”—interrogated the friendly youth.

“ Nothing that concerns you, my dear George,” was Stephen’s smooth reply.

“ Well but what—tell me what has happened.”

“ Only Miss Montague is lost.”

“ Lost ! How ! Where ! When !”

“ Read those letters” [pointing to the table]. “ They will too fully explain the disgraceful business.”

George looked over the pages with a trembling haste, and when he understood  
the

the circumstances, swore they must all be false.

Stephen sharply rebuked him, but as their contest is not material to our history, we will pass to the effect which the intelligence had upon Mr. Seymour. For a time, he suspected that he was not right in his intellects, so impossible did it appear to him that Harriet could have been capable of such conduct. Instead of being torn, as might have been expected, by a whirlwind of passion, he was in a stupid calm, discrediting the facts that still his reason forced him to believe; so strong was the evidence which Mr. Stephen Percival, with a well feigned reluctance and with expressions of grief for being obliged by the necessity of the circumstances to distress him, offered to his perusal.

In a state of wretched irresolution—sometimes determining to *write*, sometimes to *go*, to Beverly; then, upon revolving in his mind her apparent treatment of him, previous to his departure from thence, endeavoring

endeavoring to persuade himself to wait with patience, the event—did he pass the remainder of the day and the night following, but unable to endure the conflict, he arose early in the morning with a determination to send a second inquiry to Miss Spencer, when a letter from that lady was put into his hands. She had delayed an answer to the last which she had received from him, because she could not answer it to his wishes, but, when the fatal story was confirmed, she thought it right, however painful on such an occasion it might be to her, to be explicit. The account which she gave, though written with all possible or allowable tenderness to the lost Harriet, was a confirmation of his wretchedness; and as if this was insufficient to complete it, the next post brought him a letter penned by Harriet herself, which extinguished every remnant of lingering belief. This last had not any date but that of Thursday morning. Its post mark, was London.

Not



Not forgetting the circumstance, which has formerly been mentioned, of Miss Montague's being commanded by Mrs. Mitchel and Mrs. Percival to amend an epistle written in a novel from a lady to a gentleman whom, after an engagement to marry, she was determined to discard, the reader will readily conjecture this amended letter is the one which is now to appear. Captain Millemont had not then been seen at Beverly; but there was at that period another scheme in agitation, in the prosecution of which, this manœuvre would, probably, have been equally successful. The letter, directed by Mrs. Mitchel, and sent to the general office, was as follows.

“ SIR,

“ As you, I well know, have a heart  
“ alive to susceptible feelings, your com-  
“ passion will lead you to soften whatever  
“ resentment may arise in your breast upon  
“ the subject of this letter, when I affirm  
“ that

“ that the task of writing it, is to me, so  
“ truly afflicting that I can scarce guide  
“ my pen to perform the dictates of justice  
“ and necessity.

“ My sincere friendship, you ever were,  
“ and ever will be in possession of. My  
“ affection—alas ! it is not in my power  
“ to give that to my wishes, or I never  
“ would give it to any other than yourself,  
“ as my reason approves you, and my heart  
“ assures me that I have your esteem ; a  
“ sentiment which I so highly value, that  
“ the pain of requesting you to withdraw  
“ it from me is greater than I can describe.  
“ But who can withstand the bias of fate !—  
“ for nothing less than fate could surely  
“ have drawn me into my present situa-  
“ tion ?—A situation, which, I blush to  
“ acknowledge, comprises all my wishes.  
“ When we last parted, how dreadful would  
“ have sounded the sentence—*that we no*  
“ *more must meet!!!* Yet now I must pro-  
“ nounce—must enforce the denunciation,  
“ for oh ! my friend ! generosity forbids  
“ my

“ my attempting to conceal what I tremble  
“ to confess—*that my heart is another's.*  
“ After this, what can I say that you will  
“ accept ! My esteem, my high regard, I  
“ have said are your's, refuse not then the  
“ gratitude and friendship of the too much  
“ obliged

“ HARRIET.”

The latter part of this letter consisted chiefly of what Mrs. Mitchel called her emendations, and which was so exactly consonant with what Seymour had previously been told, that it scarce could fail of producing the desired effect. Passion now took place of stupidity. Mr. Seymour arose in a paroxysm of rage. The insensibility—the *hardiesse* which he fancied that he perceived in her style, drove him to almost madness, as it was constantly opposed by that early implanted idea of her susceptibility and gentleness, which composed so charming a part of her character, and which had so entirely completed the

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conquest of his affection. The friendship which she promised, he considered as an insult, and in the height of passion sat down to express his resentment upon paper, without its occurring that he knew not where to address her. When this circumstance struck upon his mind, he tore the partly written letter and threw it from him. He then endeavored to regain his reason, and in a short time fancied that he had collected sufficient philosophy (which, in fact, was nothing more than despair) to give up all present thoughts of endeavoring to develop the rise of his wretchedness.

From this period Mr. Seymour entered into the gaieties of the town. With a confusion of sentiments he frequented the most celebrated resorts of the young and dissipated of both sexes, where his figure; his address; his understanding; his vivacity, made him distinguished and courted by the first in the circle of fashion; and he was soon considered as being at the head of the *beau monde*. It need not, after this,

be told our readers that he invaded the peace of his fair companions : such a young man as Henry Seymour, was born to captivate. His mind and manners conquered the soft and sensible, as much as his figure attracted the eye of the more volatile of the tender sex.

About this period Mr. Barker returned to Cambridge, and upon being told by Seymour, for whom he had the most affectionate regard, of the event which, in spite of all his endeavors, “ sat heavy on his soul,” he expressed the highest degree of astonishment and shewed some symptoms of unbelief, but a minute’s investigation into the circumstances and a letter from Mr. Russel, compelled him to yield his credence to what he, at first, thought an impossibility. The worthy tutor was now deeply concerned for his favorite pupil, and so far from wishing him to attend more closely to his studies, promoted his diversions, being convinced that they would not be pursued but with honor, and well

knowing that college lectures could add little to that fund of erudition of which his young friend was previously possessed. It was not on Mr. Seymour's account that Mr. Barker had been sedulous to remove his little seminary to Cambridge: the Percivals, whose progress in literature had not been so rapid, were, in this particular, the more immediate objects of his attention. Henry was master of every science. His knowledge was universal; yet so unassuming was his manner that the elders of the College, far from looking upon him with invidious eyes, loved as much as they admired him. But the two eldest Percivals beheld him with increasing ill-will, and this was evinced by a sullen deportment in Robert; while Stephen put on a countenance of kindness, to cover a malignant and plotting heart, and endeavored with all possible skill, but without effect, to undermine the reputation of the man whom he called his friend.

## CHAP. LVIII.

*Friendship.*

**A**MONGST the various amusements which now engaged the attention of our Henry, music stood foremost. His soul was framed for harmony; his voice was exceedingly melodious, and he excelled upon almost every instrument. A love for this science led him to frequent a select concert held once a week at the house of a Mr. Eversham, a gentleman of large fortune, who had buried his wife about six months. Her disorder was a lingering consumption, and she having an high opinion of an elderly gentleman who practised physic at Cambridge, Mr. Eversham took a house in that town, where he afterwards found himself so much amused that he was unwilling to quit it; though, as he was father to two daughters, Olivia and Eliza,

it was not deemed an eligible residence for his family. He had likewise under his guardianship the daughter of a deceased sister of Mrs. Eversham's, who had been married to the Earl of Broomley, at whose death, this child (Lady Jane Sommerton), with a fortune of fifty thousand pounds, was consigned to the care of Mr. Eversham and educated with his daughters. Mrs. Eleanor Highman, another sister of his lady's, inspected the management of his family and superintended the education of the young ladies.

At the house of this gentleman Mr. Seymour found himself more at ease than in any other place, Mr. Eversham holding him in high estimation, and Mr. Barker frequently accompanying him in his visits. It may be conjectured that the presence of the young ladies, who were about his own age, were the objects which afforded the principal pleasure to Mr. Seymour in these parties; and certain it is that he always was agreeably entertained in their company;



pany ; but the charms of friendship were better suited to the situation of his heart, at this period, than those of love.

The house of Mr. Eversham was frequently crowded with visitants of both sexes. The old and the young ; the grave and the gay of respectable characters and manners met here with a welcome reception. It was in these assemblies Mr. Seymour first experienced that genuine friendship for which nature had particularly adapted his soul. He had indeed a very high respect and regard for Mr. Barker, but still it was different from that spontaneous affection which, often upon an early acquaintance, springs up in two congenial minds, and unites them through their future existence. Clifford was the name of the man who awakened in the breast of Seymour this noble principle. The similitude of their sentiments led them to a minute observation of each others manners and a more particular inquiry respecting disposition and principles, during which

time their hearts so insensibly united, that without any formal expressions of future amity, they were FRIENDS in the first sense of the word ; and almost before they were conscious of it, had entered into a bond which some odd and old-fashioned ideas dispose us to believe will survive the ruins of the universe,

\* \* \* \* \*

We have not for a considerable period found ourselves disposed to pay any particular respects to our admiring readers. Indeed we have been so pressed by the business of our story that we could not find leisure for any compliments ; and we are even now in such haste to proceed with the relation that we cannot give much time to politeness, though we are unwilling to lose sight of that grace, which in the true acceptance of the term is a real virtue. It's semblance indeed—the good breeding of the present age—is a cloak for vicious sentiments ; deceit, easy impudence and lying,

lying, making a claim to the appellation of politeness.

I was, madam, the other day in company with two gentlemen and two ladies ; one of the first, a dignified character, and one of the ladies a modern *belle* whose education ought to have rendered her a person of morality, yet they both joined with the other gentleman, who is a professed debauchee and a practical libertine, in asserting that politeness consists in speaking untruths with an air of sincerity ; in disguising our real sentiments of the people with whom we associate and in flattering every one with whom we are conversant. A modest young lady about eighteen, ventured to give it as her opinion that true politeness is not only consistent with virtue, but is a virtue in itself ; that it arises, in a good heart, from a general desire of pleasing, and that good nature, joined with good sense, constitutes, when polished by an intercourse with genteel people, the principle they were discussing. She then modestly

deftly referred to Mrs. Chapone's opinion in support of her own.

“ Good fenfe and good nature Mifs Emily !” exclaimed the other who was a mifs confiderably her fuperior in age—  
“ What have good fenfe and good nature  
“ to do with the manners of people in  
“ fashionable life ! Pray my dear lay afide  
“ fuch antique ideas before you attempt  
“ to mix with the world !”—Thus did ſhe purſue her triumph with a loud laugh to the confuſion of the young bluſhing advocate for truth and ſincerity ; while the gentleman, whoſe character called upon him to defend Miſs Emily's ſentiments, bowed a compliment to the deciſion of the vociferous one ; and the debauchee ſtared impudently in her face, and made her ſuch a flattering ſpeech as could only pleaſe a mind void of both delicacy and wiſdom.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

*To Kindred of all Degrees.*

**W**E finished our last chapter with a few hints upon politeness, being led rather unexpectedly into the subject by a recollection of the conversation we there recited, and as it may possibly afford some encouragement to the diffident young lady who contended with her noisy senior, we will not apologize to our other readers for giving it a place in these pages, as we deem it our duty to assist the meek and modest, against those bold and forward females, who in the opinion of the shallow and injudicious “carry,” as their phrase is, “all before them.”

Mr. Clifford was the son of a gentleman descended from a noble family, though of but moderate fortune. His age, when he was introduced to Seymour, was about  
twenty-

twenty-two, but he did not choose to quit Cambridge, where his finances, too slender to establish a household, enabled him to live genteely. At the death of a gentleman who was upwards of eighty, and who was very infirm and almost childish, he expected to inherit a large estate, and likewise a considerable personal property. This gentleman was uncle to Mr. Clifford's mother, and hated his grand-nephew for no other cause than that of being his nearest relation. He supposed the young man must necessarily have a wish for his death, that he might inherit his property; but this opinion offered much injustice to our new acquaintance, who in a distinguishable degree was nobly disinterested.

This dislike to our heirs, if they are not children, and indeed sometimes if they are, is not, I am afraid, so singular as may be supposed. The sons and daughters of our brothers and sisters used in good old-fashioned times to be considered as our own; but now the case is otherwise. Nephews  
and

and nieces excite jealousy. The tenderness shown to them by the common ancestors create an apprehension of their having more than their share of the common patrimony; and their relations, instead of entertaining them with kindness, and exerting their influence to advance them in the world, depreciate and oppress them; insulting them with being dependants on the family; considering them as menials, and treating them with more haughtiness than they do their domestics. If any part of the family estate be entailed upon them, the inveteracy encreases; they are almost ready to suspect them of conspiring their death; and after impoverishing the property as much as possible, leave from them every thing over which they have any power.

Perhaps in the last Age, the love of kindred was carried to the contrary extreme. A contraction of sentiment prevailed at that period which divided the World into petty parties: every one not related by law or lineage, was deemed a stranger; and a  
man

man of another Nation was an object of curiosity to all; and to many of terror. It never entered into the politics of the seventeenth Century, that the Universe was but one family now, or that one Country hereafter, would be destined to receive human creatures from the opposite Shores of the terrestrial Globe !

Friendship and consanguinity have doubtless a claim to the most fervid effects of our philanthropy ; after the demands of these are satisfied, the remains of our power ought to be indiscriminately exercised in promoting the benefit of any object within its reach, whether the atmosphere of Europe ; Asia ; Africa, or America first expanded the lungs of the suppliant ; or whether his adoration is, or is not, conveyed to the Throne of Mercy in the form of words which we ourselves have been accustomed to use on the same awful—the same universal occasion.

But whither have we wandered ! To what height are we soaring ! The Love of  
Man



Man, and the Love of GOD are so immediately—so intimately—so inseparably united, both by the Law of Nature, and the Precepts of the Gospel, the last elucidating and enforcing the first, that in meditating on one, we are inevitably raised to contemplate the other, and are virtually taught that Philanthropy is that Grand Scale by which we must ascend the Regions of Celestial Harmony.

END OF VOL. II.

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered.











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